



UNION AND STRENGTH

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A SERIES OF PAPERS ON IMPERIAL QUESTIONS

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PREFACE

THE papers which compose the present volume have been published or delivered on various occasions during the last few years. My only excuse for republishing them as they stand is that they derive a certain unity from the common purpose which has underlain them, and from the common body of ideas to which they give expression. The urgent necessity of attaining to some real and enduring constitutional union for the British Empire, of paving the way towards that union by the development of mutual trade, and of defending the existence of that Empire from destruction by external force during the period of transition—that, stated in its various aspects, is the theme which, I trust, will give sufficient coherence and continuity to this volume to justify its appearance.

Many of these papers first appeared in the columns of *The Times*, while No. V., 'The Military Geography of the British Empire,' was published in the *National Review*. 'The Case for National Service' was originally included as an anonymous chapter in Lord Roberts's *Fallacies and Facts*, and the paper on 'Imperial Defence and National Policy' in Mr. C. S. Goldman's *The Empire and the Century*. I have to thank Lord

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UNION AND STRENGTH

I

IMPERIAL UNITY¹

IMPERIAL UNITY is a theme whose adequate presentment requires a book, some great work, as yet unwritten, which, like Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, shall dominate our national thought for generations. For me to attempt to deal with it in an hour or so is to court the risk of wearying you with a string of obvious commonplaces. And yet I think the risk is worth running. It is worth while, before we begin, just to pause and ask ourselves what it is that we are after. We hear plenty of talk about Imperial Unity. What, after all, do we mean by those words? And, given the answer to that question, is that Imperial Unity really something worth attaining and worth our striving for? Apart from the mere pride of bulk, what real good is there in Imperial Union for the states which compose it, for the men and women who live in those states, for mankind at large? And for ourselves what is the meaning of that idea of Imperial Unity to be in our lives? Is it just one particular notion dwelling in our minds alongside with scores of others, enlisting from time to time a proportionate fraction of our energies on its behalf? Or is it something far greater; a framework in which all our other theories and aims can find their appropriate place; a common goal towards which all our efforts can be directed along their different channels; something which can bring unity, purpose, and contentment into our lives?

¹ Read at the inaugural meeting of the Chatham Club, July 15, 1910.

What do we mean when we talk of Imperial Unity ? We mean that all the various territories and peoples now comprised within the British Empire—the United Kingdom, the great self-governing Dominions, the Empire of India, the various dependencies all over the world—shall remain permanently and indissolubly bound together for the defence of their common interests, and for the development of a common civilisation. We mean that while each part shall enjoy the utmost freedom compatible with the stage of political and general development which it may have attained, it shall yet remain united to the rest, not in a mere alliance, which can be made or unmade, but in a true constitutional union. We mean that all its members shall remain citizens of a single world-wide state with a duty and a loyalty towards that state, none the less real and intense because of the co-existence with it of a duty and a loyalty towards the particular nation or community within the Empire to which they may belong.

There are plenty of people who will tell us that all this fuss and worry about Imperial Unity is misplaced ; that Imperial Unity, as I have described it, exists already, and that the only result of trying to interfere with existing constitutional relations in the Empire will be to create friction and precipitate a possible rupture. The first task, then, before those of us who disagree with this view is to make it perfectly clear to ourselves and to others why the unity of the Empire, such as it exists to-day, is both insecure and unstable. We have to point out what factors, internal and external, threaten, either by a slow and gradual process of disintegration, or else by a sudden cataclysm, to destroy the British Empire, and what measures must be taken to counteract those dangers, and to place the security and cohesion of the Empire beyond their reach.

Let me take the external danger first. The British Empire is the child of sea power, and can only live by sea power.

The moment the control of the sea passes out of British hands the Empire falls to pieces. That control of the sea is, as we all know, already seriously impaired. The immense development of the German Navy has led to a concentration of our naval forces in home waters, which has involved the practical abandonment of the rest of the world's ocean highways. In the Pacific sea power has passed into the hands of the Japanese, our allies at present. In the Atlantic it is in the hands of the Americans, at present our very good friends. The French and Italians control the Mediterranean highway to India and Australia. We exist as an Empire to-day, to some extent at least, by the grace of the Americans and Japanese. No empire can live for long by foreign favour or foreign alliances. If its strength is not within itself it must in the end come to grief.

The immediate cause of the present dangerous and unsatisfactory position is, indeed, as much a military as a naval question. It is the military weakness of the United Kingdom which has driven us to use the Navy as a purely local weapon of defence against one particular possible adversary, and has thus partially paralysed it for the general purposes of Imperial defence. To liberate the Navy and restore it to its proper functions by building up a really adequate military system in this country is not only a national, but an Imperial duty.

But the creation of a serious military system in this country, vital and essential as it is to Imperial security as well as to local defence, does not dispose of the growing menace to our control of the seas. That menace is contained in the immense growth in wealth and population of other states, which will enable them to maintain ever-increasing armaments. The two-power standard of naval strength is necessary to us, not merely as a margin against all contingencies, however remote, but because the enormous

extent of our Empire, and the diffusion of our interests all over the world, present points of contact and friction with so many Powers, and offer so many temptations to the covetousness of others, that a coalition against us must always be reckoned with, not as a remote contingency, but as an ever-present probability. But how are we, with our forty-four millions of people, to maintain in the future a one-power standard, let alone a two-power standard, in the face of Powers like America, with over eighty millions, and Germany with her sixty-five millions, or over a hundred millions if you include Austria-Hungary, which, for purposes of external policy, is in an ever-increasing degree coalescing with her? The task is an impossible one, if it has to be undertaken, as it has been hitherto, by this country alone. It is not impossible if it is undertaken by the Empire as a whole, if we can enlist the growing strength of the great Dominions in the common task.

But here we come face to face at once with the constitutional issue. At present we in the United Kingdom sustain practically the whole burden of Imperial defence. But, on the other hand, we also control the whole general policy of the Empire. The great issues of peace and war, the conduct of the foreign policy which leads up to and determines those issues, are in our hands. The Dominions have no say in these matters. The two things are correlative. Unless and until we admit the Dominions into responsible partnership in the control of our Imperial policy, we cannot hope to see them taking that full share in the defence of the Empire which alone can avert its forcible disruption at the hands of stronger Powers. However satisfactory the existing constitutional arrangements of the Empire might be from the purely internal standpoint of the relations between the United Kingdom and the Dominions, they are inadequate to secure the Empire against the growing danger from without. Imperial Unity, to be real, must be

effective in common action, and no such unity exists to-day, or can exist, until the constitution of the Empire is remodelled.

But the continuance of Imperial Unity, such as it exists to-day, is menaced not less from within than from without. As I said just now, the United Kingdom monopolises the whole of the external and Imperial functions of the national life of the British race. Foreign policy, peace and war, the administration of subject territories—these are among the most important aspects of any nation's life, and in respect to them the citizens of the Dominions are disfranchised. This was well enough in the days when they were mere colonists struggling with the problems of taming the wilderness, and entirely unconcerned with those external relations from which British sea power effectively shielded them. But to-day they are in contact at every point with the new world-powers that have grown up. They themselves have become nations, proud of their nationality, and consciously or instinctively determined to claim all the rights and privileges of nationhood. They number thirteen millions to-day. They will number twenty millions before very many years are out. Some of us may live to see Canada alone exceeding the United Kingdom in population and wealth. Is it likely that they will be content with what a Canadian has well described as a 'maimed and mutilated British citizenship'? They already exercise complete control over their own defence forces. They must inevitably press—they are, in fact, continually pressing—to take the control of their external relations into their own hands.

There are only two ways in which that natural and rightful demand of theirs can be met. One is to let the present process continue, and to acquiesce in the gradual development of a separate external policy by each self-governing part of the Empire. The inevitable result of

that process is complete disintegration. Each part of the Empire would conduct its own foreign policy, and would inevitably have to face the consequences of that policy. In dealing with each part foreign Powers would take care first to buy off the opposition of the rest. Let us take an imaginary instance. To-day, if Japan wished to force her emigrants on Australia, she would deal with the British Embassy, and behind the courteous negative of the British Ambassador would be the whole armed force of the Empire. Under a system of separate foreign policies Japan would first, by various concessions, or by diplomatic support in other quarters, make sure of the British, Canadian, and South African foreign offices and ministers before coming to Australia with her demands. If Australia rejected those demands, what guarantee would she have that the others would support her in a policy for which they disclaimed all responsibility, and would for the sake of that policy sacrifice all the advantages they secured through Japan's favour? And in that case would not Australia at once look for support to any Power that was prepared to support her against Japan, even if that Power were known to cherish hostile designs against other parts of the Empire? The control of foreign policy in fact means, not only the right to conduct specific negotiations on points of detail, but inevitably carries with it, in the long run, the power of making treaties and alliances, and an uncontrolled decision over the issue of peace and war. Once those powers are no longer exercised in common, the Empire for all practical purposes has ceased to exist.

The other way is to meet the demand of the Dominions for a complete national life, and for a voice in the decision of their own destinies, by admitting them to full partnership with ourselves in the control of Imperial policy. Make the Canadian a real citizen of the Empire, and he will be content to remain within the Empire. But if we think

that we can continue to reserve the only full citizenship of the Empire to the people of these islands, we must face the fact that the Canadian will still insist on making his citizenship real and complete—outside the Empire.

There is yet another internal factor which menaces the unity and security of the Empire. If the Dominions are deprived of that full Imperial citizenship which they have a right to claim, we on our side are over-weighted by it. Our whole political system in this country is based on a party division essentially and inherently of a local character. The local franchise, the relations between the two local Houses of Parliament, the Irish problem, the educational question, the liquor question, the powers and privileges of trade unions, the adjustment of taxation, the domestic issue of Free Trade or Protection—these and a score of other local issues form the real groundwork of our politics, and, in the main, decide the division of parties. Yet it is a party majority, elected on these local issues, that has to carry on the administrative policy of the Empire, that is responsible for the foreign policy of South Africa, for the defence of Australia, for the good government and prosperity of India, Egypt, or Trinidad. And almost inevitably the party minority, elected to oppose the Government on these local issues, tends to oppose it on Imperial questions as well, and is continually subject to the temptation of making party capital out of Imperial interests. How can such a system make for efficiency in Imperial administration? How can it avoid from time to time leading to the most unfortunate results? Even worse, the constant competition between Imperial and local needs for the time of the House of Commons and for the money of the nation creates a tendency to treat the defence and good government of the Empire as if they were necessarily opposed to good government and social reform at home. It breeds a whole class of earnest, well-meaning politicians, who, consciously or

unconsciously, regard the British Empire as a nuisance, who start with a prejudice against every part of it, and are prepared to condemn offhand every suggestion made for its more efficient defence, for its economic development, or for its political unity. There is only one effective way to deal with this menace to the safety and unity of the Empire, and that is the complete separation of British home politics from Imperial politics. Let the Parliament of the United Kingdom become free, as the Parliament of Australia and the Parliament of Canada are free, to deal adequately with the many domestic questions that press for its attention. But let the conduct of Imperial affairs be free also, free from narrow partisan rivalries, and unhampered by local or sectional cross issues.

From whichever point of view we regard the Imperial problem, whether from that of the external danger to our naval supremacy, or from that of the growing national life and ambition of the Dominions, or from that of our own domestic affairs, we come to the same conclusion. The present situation is insecure, unstable, and cannot possibly go on many years longer. And each aspect of the question leads to the further conclusion that the effective unity of the Empire can only be secured and maintained by a constitutional change which will bring the Dominions into full responsible partnership with the Mother Country in the defence and administration of their common interests, and which will take those common interests out of the control of a Parliament which is Imperial in name but essentially local in its constitution and in its predominant interests.

What does that partnership involve? It must include, to begin with, a common foreign policy. The outside world must deal with the Empire as a single state and not as a loose group of allies, some of whom it may be possible to detach from the rest. And as foreign policy and war are

but different phases of the same problem of external relations, it must also include a common policy of defence, though not necessarily any common administration of the defence forces of the Empire. Again, inasmuch as defence means money or personal service, it must also include a common decision as to the provision of that money or as to the rendering of that service. Further, partnership naturally and necessarily includes a share in the control of the dependent portions of the Empire, whether that control be regarded as a burden or as a great privilege. Last, but not least, there must be some body, representative of the citizens of each partner State, which shall have authority over the ministers responsible for Imperial administration, and shall be empowered to sanction the raising of the necessary revenue. I have said nothing about common legislation or about a common economic policy. Those things may or may not be desirable, but they are not essential. And in undertaking so great a task as the complete remodelling of our constitutional system here and in the Dominions, it is the essentials on which we must concentrate our attention.

By what steps we are to proceed on the way towards a true Imperial partnership is a matter outside the limited scope of this paper. The one essential condition to keep in mind is that the partnership must be real and complete as far as it goes, and that it must be based on the recognition of the full political equality between the citizens of this country and the citizens of the younger nations. The United Kingdom must come into the partnership on exactly the same footing as the other Dominions, from which it may differ in population and wealth, but not in political status. It may, for the present at any rate, have more votes in any Imperial Assembly than any other Dominion. But in that assembly every vote must have the same value. There can be no special prerogative, no exclusive

functions pertaining to the British vote and not assigned to the votes of the Dominions. There can be no question of the Dominions subordinating themselves to the United Kingdom, though they and the United Kingdom alike will be subordinate to an Imperial authority in which each of them is a full partner.

I have said very little so far about the dependent Empire. Those of us who advocate Imperial Union are often charged with being indifferent to the interests of India and of the other dependencies, and with caring only for a federation of the white communities. We are not indifferent. We have no desire to renounce the great responsibilities that we have undertaken, or the great advantages we enjoy through the government of the dependent Empire. The idea of Empire would be incomplete in our minds if it were only a federation of the Dominions, and if it did not also include the task of uplifting the peoples of other races for whom we are responsible, and of keeping them permanently bound in peace and common citizenship with ourselves. But the affairs of the dependent Empire do not constitute an immediate constitutional problem of the same urgent character as that which I have been discussing. Few parts of it have yet reached a stage at which even a moderate degree of local self-government is possible. The desire to control not only their internal affairs, but their external relations, which is the problem in the case of the Dominions, has not yet become conscious, nor is it likely to acquire consciousness or strength for a long time to come. Some of us may look forward to a distant future when the descendants of the men over whom we are now ruling will become, in every sense, equal partners in the control of Imperial affairs. If that is ever to be possible—and I for one should not venture to deny its ultimate possibility—partnership will have to be preceded by long and full experience of local self-government. Even in India, with its intelligent

peoples and its historic civilisation, we are still only a little way on the road towards self-government, and it is a road on which we dare not proceed except by very gradual and tentative stages. For the moment our task is to develop the economic resources of the dependent Empire, to train its inhabitants in the practical education of commerce and industry, and thus gradually to build up that more developed and progressive social structure without which any form of free government is impossible. Our descendants will have a great task in dealing with the constitutional issues in the dependent Empire. Our task for the present is by wise administration to lay the foundation for the developments of the future. And in that task we need all the help and co-operation we can get from the younger free nations in the Empire.

True partnership with the younger nations both in the defence of the Empire against external aggression and in developing the resources and uplifting the peoples of the dependent Empire—that, in short, is what we mean by Imperial Unity. But, given the goal thus described, there is a further question that we must face. Is the goal worth striving for? In what respect is our ideal better than the ideal which inspired the great majority of Englishmen fifty years ago, and which, less clearly formulated, still really dominates the minds of not a few of our politicians—the ideal, I mean, of a gradual, peaceful disintegration of the Empire, as its several parts become capable of standing on their own feet, leaving the Mother Country, freed of all Imperial responsibilities, to devote herself to peace and domestic reform?

To that question I think we can give a very direct and practical answer. The ideal thus described is based on imaginary conditions which cannot be realised in practice. Peace and domestic prosperity are matters which depend not only on our own choice, but on that of others. The

people of the United Kingdom are dependent for their prosperity, and indeed for their very existence, on a world-wide trade, which is ours only because we are at present strong enough to defend it. The question is not whether we shall peacefully cast off our dependencies, retaining our trade with them ; but whether our dependencies and our trade are not to be forcibly taken away from us by a stronger power. If the task of defending the Empire is too much for the United Kingdom, precisely the same is true of the defence of the United Kingdom alone, for the measure of the task is not so much the extent of what we have to defend as the strength of the adversaries whom we may have to encounter. The strength of the United Kingdom will soon be insufficient either to defend the Empire or to defend itself. Only the strength of a united Empire can defend the Empire as a whole, or any part of it. For what is true of the United Kingdom is equally true of every part of the Empire. Neither Canada, nor Australia, nor South Africa, still less India, can afford to stand alone in the world. Even those parts of the Empire which might, perhaps, succeed in maintaining an independent existence could only do so at a far heavier cost in armaments than would be involved in maintaining the integrity of the Empire, and their nominal independence, subject to the continuous pressure and competition of more powerful rivals, would be something far less than the real freedom they would enjoy within the Empire. For every part of the Empire, in fact, unity means greater opportunities of a full national life, greater prosperity, and a smaller burden of armaments. For every part the break-up of the Empire means contracted ambitions, a narrower outlook, a check to economic development, and heavier burdens. Even from the point of view of humanity at large the maintenance of the Empire means the permanent preservation of peace between a quarter of the world's population, and the settle-

ment by discussion and reason of all conflicts of interest within that area. It means a tremendous limitation of the area of international conflict, and an immense increase of our power to preserve peace beyond that area.

That is a matter-of-fact answer, sufficient for most purposes. But I think we may venture on this occasion to go a little deeper into the question, and consider whether, apart from the practical necessities imposed on us by the present state of the world, our ideal is not, in itself, a finer and a truer one than any other political ideal which can claim to compete with it. Let me review briefly the chief political ideals which in the past have exercised their hold over the imagination of men. The Roman Empire embodied a great ideal, the ideal of good government, peace, and a common bond of citizenship embracing the whole civilised world. We find it expressed in the splendid lines of the *Æneid* :

*Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento
(Hæc tibi erunt artes), pacisque imponere morem
Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos.*

Thine, Roman, be the thought to rule the peoples by thy sway, to impose the habit of peace, to spare the conquered and to crush the proud.

Even more striking in its idealism is the eloquent passage in Claudian which begins :

*Haec est in gremio victos quæ sola recepit
Humanumque genus communi nomine fovit
Matris, non dominae, ritu ; civesque vocavit
Quos domuit.*

She that alone hath taken the conquered to her bosom ; she that hath broken her adversaries only to call them her own citizens, sheltering them under one all-embracing name, the name of Rome, not mistress, but mother of mankind. .

Most sublime of all was the Roman ideal as transformed by the imagination of the Middle Ages, long after the

downfall of Rome—the ideal, extolled by Dante, of a great spiritual and political community of all Christendom ; a community ordered in a divinely established hierarchy of powers ; a world in which every individual was born into his appointed sphere of usefulness, and found his life's work ready to hand. But the ideal bore no relation to any existing or possible reality. The Holy Roman Empire, from the twelfth century onwards, was little more than a fiction covering the gradual process by which the nation-states of modern Europe have sprung out of the wreckage of the real Roman Empire. From the first, too, the whole conception of the divinely-ordered hierarchic state, alien to the free spirit of the northern races of Europe, began to crumble away. From Magna Charta onwards the struggle for free government, for the recognition of the rights of the individual apart from those of the State, continued with varying success. The Renaissance and the Reformation asserted the right of private judgment in matters intellectual and spiritual.

By the middle of the nineteenth century the process of disintegration was complete. The old ideal had vanished. In the place of the conception of the divinely-ordered omnipotent state stood the conception of the absolute supremacy of the rights of the individual. The State, in so far as it was required at all, was regarded simply as an arrangement whereby individuals transacted certain common business. War was regarded as a mere barbarous survival of an older period, when monarchs, to satisfy their ambition or their greed, caused their subjects to kill each other. Patriotism itself was a picturesque anachronism, destined to disappear as the enlightened individuals of the future realised that their true country was the world at large. Side by side with this individualist cosmopolitan theory was another theory, no less in vogue at that time, and like it sprung out of the break-up of the older system, the theory

of nationalities. The right, proper, and final political unit was assumed to be a nation, a collection of individuals of the same race, speaking the same language, and sharing certain customs and ideals in common. Every nation had the right to establish its own government; any attempt to extend the bounds of a political system beyond those of a single nation was undesirable and tyrannical. The accident of a common resistance to certain existing autocratic and non-national governments in Europe caused these two ideals to be almost blended together in the minds of nineteenth-century Liberalism. The most ardent preachers of democratic cosmopolitan individualism were also the most zealous champions of Greek, Italian, Hungarian or Slav independence and of German unity.

But the two ideals are in truth wholly incompatible. The whole foundation of Nationalism lies in the realisation of the fact that there are no such things as the independent individuals whom the individualist ideal postulated. Men are what they are, do what they do, wish what they wish, just because they are born of a certain race and into a certain society. Race-instinct or patriotism are as much natural emotions as hunger or self-interest. The ideal man of the Cobdenite gospel was an impossible creature—‘either a beast or a god,’ as Aristotle puts it. But once we give away the Cobdenite individual, the whole theoretical framework of society based on him—the non-aggressive state, confined to enforcing contracts and imprisoning thieves—disappears. And so we have seen it turn out in practice. Nothing could be remoter from the ideal of sixty years ago than the nations of modern Europe, organised far more highly and thoroughly than the old autocracies ever were, and organised even more determinedly and avowedly than they ever were for the purposes of war and conquest.

But if cosmopolitan individualism has broken down as an ideal, both through its inherent falsity and through its

sheer impracticability in a world of organised fighting nations, can we accept the national ideal, pure and simple, as a satisfactory substitute? Are we content to leave everything beyond the confines of the national life an endless anarchy of elemental conflict? And what guide does that ideal give us in dealing with alien races, incapable of organising themselves into any efficient national life? Are they simply to be exploited in the interests of the higher nations, or are they to be left to themselves to evolve a nationality of their own in the fulness of time? It is the realisation of these defects, these crudities, in the dominant nationalist ideal that has inspired those who have worked for the extension of the principle of international arbitration, for international conventions on the conduct of war or the government of savage races. We can approve of their efforts, but it would be foolish to exaggerate their success in the past, or the prospects of a great development of international arbitration and international law in the near future. We must not forget that the summoning of the first Hague Conference was followed by the South African and Russo-Japanese Wars, and that it was a series of humanitarian congresses that led to the establishment of King Leopold's rule in Belgium.

An anarchy of conflicting nation-states, tempered by the slow and uncertain growth of internationalism, that is all the ideal that the world at large can aspire to in these days. But for one quarter of mankind, at least, a far higher destiny, a far nobler ideal, is attainable. The British Empire, within its confines, stands for a system in which each of the ideals which I have discussed can attain its highest practical development. The United Kingdom and the younger nations which have sprung from it represent the highest existing development of the ideal of the free, self-governing nation-state. The sense of justice and fairness pervading all our institutions, the regard for the rights

and liberties of every individual and of every class, combined with a collective national life no less intense and no less capable of effective organisation than that of any other state—these are things dear to us, things well worth maintaining, at the cost of any sacrifice. Again, the British Empire stands for the highest form of government yet devised for subject or backward races. The ideas of trusteeship, of duty towards the weak and the ignorant, of education in its broadest sense—these have consciously or unconsciously inspired our whole system of government in the dependent Empire, and have given that government its characteristic quality. But the ideal of Imperial Union is something more than the best form of national self-government for white men in accidental conjunction with the best form of external rule for other races. It is the combination of both of these aspects into a higher unity ; a unity of free nations, not antagonistic, but co-operating, and co-operating with each other not only against the outside world, but in the common task of uplifting the dependent races towards true freedom and true friendship. The lawless anarchy of modern nationalism, the threatening ruthless struggle between West and East, the callous exploitation of the backward and helpless—for all these unhappy features of the modern world the British Empire, within its confines, substitutes the rule of law, of conciliation and of mutual help, and the inspiration of a wider patriotism. Over a region far wider than the Empire of Rome, it stands for an ideal as sublime as the Roman ever was, but an ideal more real and more living because based on the vitality of free nations, and adapted more closely to the political needs and capacities of each part. There is nothing, indeed, in Imperial Union, when we consider the diversity of the races, civilisations and interests under the British flag, to differentiate it from that union of all mankind of which some idealists have dreamed, except just

the comparatively unimportant difference of bulk. The British Empire is a whole world in itself. Imperial Unity differs from the wildest dream of humanitarian idealism only in this—that it is actually and directly within our reach. The federation of the world may be a glorious aspiration for the dim future. Imperial Unity can be made a no less glorious reality in our own day.

In concentrating our endeavours on the permanent union of the British Empire, we are in no sense abandoning any duty we owe to humanity at large. The ideal of Imperial Unity is not one of splendid isolation ; no Chinese or even American ideal of a world apart and sufficient to itself. By its very geographical distribution the British Empire must always live in and with the rest of the world. The sea power which is essential to its existence enables, and indeed compels it, to exercise a predominant influence on the whole of the world's policy. That influence has in the past been directed to the maintenance of peace, and to resisting every attempt at undue domination by any single Power or coalition. The peaceful partition of Africa, and the isolation of the Spanish-American and Russo-Japanese conflicts, have shown that influence exercised as decisively in the last twenty years as ever in our history. And that influence must inevitably be exercised in the same direction in the future. The British Empire has, and always will have, a direct interest in the general peace and stability of the world, which must at all times form the guiding motive of its policy.

For all the causes idealists have at heart, for peace, for international co-operation, and the growth of international law, the British Empire represents the most powerful instrument that they can ever hope to have at their command. To allow that instrument to be weakened or destroyed, to let the nations and races which compose the Empire sink back from the unity of law and purpose which

binds them to the anarchy of ordinary international relations—that, if they would but realise it clearly, is the greatest crime against humanity that any party or any age could be guilty of.

But if the British Empire stands for the highest practical combination of the modern nationalist ideal with the old Roman ideal of world-wide order and peace, it also stands for the highest practical development of individualism. The final justification of a state is the individual life which it creates and fosters. Freedom and responsibility—these are the two keynotes of the British character. They have built up the British Empire in the past, and it is only in and through the British Empire that they can maintain their fullest development in the future. It is Imperial Union, with its elimination of internal conflict between one quarter of mankind, and with its wide distribution of the burden of a common defence, which alone can allow that free play of individual liberty which we prize so dearly, and which nations less happily placed are compelled to forego. Again, while Imperial Union heightens the sense of responsibility and public duty in the citizens of the governing portion of the Empire, it will no less, we believe, afford the best and fullest opportunity for the growth of individual freedom and individual responsibility in the dependent peoples. For the Anglo-Saxon, for the Indian, for the African—for each and all of these the Empire represents the medium in and through which their individual and racial qualities can attain their highest development.

So far I have treated the idea of Imperial Unity, as it were, from outside, and have attempted to give it what I may call an objective justification. But before concluding I should like, if possible, to try and convey to you what that idea can mean for each of us individually. I was speaking just now of the mediæval ideal of a single world-state which was at one and the same time a political

organisation and a spiritual community. However impracticable, no one can deny the sublimity of the conception of a world in which religious faith and civic loyalty, patriotism and Christian duty, were indissolubly blended in one all-encompassing obligation. The Reformation and its consequences seemed to strike at the very root of that conception. We have come to regard religious belief as a private matter, a personal and individual interpretation of man's relation to the Divine Power, sacred from all external interference. Immense as has been the gain, we need not be blind to the loss which has accompanied the process of gaining it. It has involved a break-up of the moral cohesion of the universe for the individual. It is to supply that loss, to meet the inward desire for a unifying principle, for a visible, concrete, spiritual fellowship among men to work for, that thinkers like Comte have held up the conception of a religion of humanity. But the conception, lofty as it is, fails to give any real guidance in practice, or to give that unity and simplicity of moral purpose which is the secret of happiness. The ideal is too vague, the practical opportunities of helping it forward are too rare and too uncertain, and in the attempt there is the almost inevitable danger of conflict with the deep-rooted moral instincts which centre in national and local patriotism.

For those of us who are privileged to belong to it, the existence of the British Empire provides a means of surmounting or harmonising these difficulties. The conception of a common moral and spiritual bond uniting all the various races and religions within the Empire is in no essential respect less lofty than the conception of a religion of humanity. But in endeavouring to realise it we enlist all the inherited instincts and traditions of patriotism on our side. Our task is no longer vague and doubtful, but definite and urgent. The whole machinery of our public life is there for us to use in carrying it out. As citizens,

as voters, as administrators or public men, we have only to give our best to the work immediately before us to know that we are playing our part in the furthering of a great ideal—an ideal whose realisation will inevitably help forward the even broader ideal of the brotherhood of man. It is as a practical working faith—a faith as sublime as any to which the imagination can soar, a daily task immediately to our hands, and bound up with our everyday life—that the ideal of Imperial Unity can mean most for us. It can give us the joy of work; the joy of believing that our work will bear fruit, and will not be wasted; the joy of knowing that it is the greatest work to which men have ever set their hands.

II

SOME PRACTICAL STEPS TOWARDS AN IMPERIAL CONSTITUTION¹

THE importance of constitutional issues is being brought home to us very directly in this country at the present time by the discussion over the powers and composition of the House of Lords. Without minimising the importance of the issues involved in that discussion, I venture to submit that there is a far more important and momentous constitutional problem which confronts us in the present relations of this country to the younger nation States in the Empire. Failure to arrive at a solution of the problem means the disruption, gradual or sudden, of the Empire as a world State, and disastrous loss, if not irretrievable ruin, to each of its component parts. What I shall endeavour to do to-night is to state the main features of that problem, to indicate what, I am convinced, is the only solution compatible with the continued existence of the British Empire, and to suggest, tentatively, certain practical steps which may pave the way towards that solution.

The essential point to keep in mind is that the existing constitutional framework of the British Empire has entirely ceased to correspond in any way with the circumstances of our time. The system under which certain Colonies enjoyed complete internal self-government while the United Kingdom retained an exclusive control over the external affairs of the whole Empire, provided for its

¹ Read at a meeting of the Royal Colonial Institute on June 14, 1910.

defence, and administered India and other Dependencies, was not ill-suited to the conditions which prevailed for the greater part of the last century. The self-governing Colonies were absorbed in the task of developing and administering their vast territories, and content to be able to devote themselves to that task unhampered by vexatious interference from the United Kingdom. Certain sides of their national life, it is true, remained under the control of Downing Street. But that caused them no practical inconvenience, and relieved them of no small expense and responsibility. The arena of the world's political conflict was then practically confined to Europe and the Near East. To the Colonies the din of contending nations sounded faint and infinitely remote across wide oceans over which the British Navy ruled unchallenged. The motives of the struggle concerned them but little ; its outcome contained no menace to their interests. Such foreign trade as they had was mainly with England ; apart from that trade they had few of those external economic interests and ambitions which underlie most international conflicts. Nor was the system seriously inconvenient from the point of view of the United Kingdom. The self-governing Colonies involved no military liabilities for the British taxpayer more serious than an occasional native war. Their naval defence called for no special provision beyond the naval supremacy which England required in any case to secure her trade, and which that trade could well afford to pay for. The conduct of their external interests involved no serious addition to the normal work of British foreign policy, whose general trend and purpose remained entirely unaffected.

All these conditions have been entirely transformed in the last twenty years, and are being transformed more rapidly every year. The scattered groups of Colonies have become great Dominions, no longer inhabited by colonists but

by young nations, nations conscious of their individuality and filled with the ambition of a great national destiny. In actual population they already number over thirteen million people—considerably more than the combined populations of Scotland, Ireland, and Wales. But in considering their political point of view we must think not so much of what they have become already, but of what, with their vast territories and boundless resources, they mean to become in the near future. Their actual present stature is that of the lesser nations that compose the United Kingdom. In political status each of them regards itself, and will have to be regarded by us, as the political equal of the United Kingdom as a whole. In discussing the problem of Imperial Union that is a vital fact which must ever be kept in mind.

Yet even more important than the internal development of the Colonies has been the transformation in their external relations. The expansion of England, which created them, has been followed by the expansion of Europe. The expansion of America and the expansion of Asia have begun. The long seclusion of the outer Empire has been broken. The younger nations are being awakened up out of their dreams of peaceful material development to find themselves in the very midst of the world's struggle for economic and military power. And if the world has come to them, they too are advancing to meet the world. They are developing economic interests and ambitions beyond their own boundaries. Canada, at least, is already rapidly reaching that stage of industrial development at which the control of the tropics, both as a market and as a source of raw materials, will become a matter of vital importance to her. At every point the Dominions are coming, in an ever-increasing degree, in contact with foreign Powers and with other parts of the British Empire. The conduct of foreign affairs, the command of the sea, the general

administration of the Empire, are becoming matters of vital and urgent concern to every one of them.

Yet over all these questions which are beginning to affect them so nearly the younger nations have no constitutional power whatever. The merest farm labourer in England has a direct say in deciding questions vitally affecting Canada and the Empire as a whole which is denied to the Prime Minister of the great Dominion. The Canadian or Australian is becoming increasingly conscious of the fact that he does not enjoy full rights of citizenship, either in the Empire as a whole or even in his own country, whose external affairs are managed for him by departments responsible to an electorate of which he forms no part. To quote the words used not long ago in the Canadian Parliament, 'he possesses only a mangled and emasculated British citizenship; his political influence is bounded by a Colonial horizon.' The situation is, it is true, mitigated in certain ways. The Colonial Governments are nowadays regularly consulted on such particular questions as admittedly concern them directly. They are asked to nominate representatives on certain international commissions. They have been left a practically free hand in the negotiation of commercial treaties. If foreign policy were merely a series of disconnected commercial or juridical problems affecting only one part of the Empire at a time, such devices might possibly be sufficient. But foreign policy, like the sea, is one and continuous. There is no such thing as a really isolated question in foreign policy—no question whose settlement one way or other does not affect our whole international position and security as an Empire. And, conversely, there is no single problem that can be dealt with satisfactorily unless the whole of our foreign policy has continuously kept that question in view and paved the way for its solution. If the interests of the Dominions are sacrificed, it is not because the Foreign Office does not

do its best on the particular questions when they arise, but because success in such matters can only be attained by years of watchful preparation. But such preparation can only be secured by constant effective pressure from those whose interests are affected, and that pressure the Dominions are not in a position to apply. The forces which mould the foreign policy of the Empire as a whole, the factors which are kept constantly in view, the ends for which policy is shaped, are the interests and prejudices of the voters of the United Kingdom, upon whose consent and approval the Foreign Secretary depends for his continuance in office. Colonial interests and ambitions are mere disturbing incidents, and are disposed of as well as can be at the moment. Over the general course of foreign policy the Dominions have no control. Yet it is only by such control that they could secure the satisfactory settlement of particular questions which interest them locally. More important still, it is only by such control that they could influence those great issues of peace and war upon which their very existence may depend. As it stands to-day, we make the policy and the Dominions have to face the consequences. Let me give a single concrete instance. Our whole policy in the Far East has been shaped by the Lancashire cotton interest and the votes behind it. It is for their sake, to protect their market in Northern China against Russian aggression, that we have helped to make Japan a first-class naval and military Power. Australia was never consulted in this policy. But, rightly or wrongly, Australia sees in the growth of Japanese power and Japanese ambition a possible menace to her very existence.

If the Dominions have no share in the conduct of those external relations of the Empire which are coming to be of such vital importance to them, they are equally without any voice in the internal administration of the Empire. From India downwards the dependent part of the Empire

is governed by England, in accordance with English ideas, and, in so far as external interests affect its administration at all, in the real or supposed interests of the United Kingdom. To put it quite bluntly : Would there be an excise duty on cotton in India to-day if the seven millions of Lancashire's population had been in the constitutional position of the seven millions of Canadians ? In the same way, the administrative services of the Empire, the diplomatic and consular services, the civil service in India and the Crown Colonies, the Army and Navy—all these splendid openings for ability and ambition—are for all practical purposes a preserve for the inhabitants of these islands. It is quite true that we here bear almost the whole burden of Empire. But we must not forget that we also reap all the incidental advantages.

The whole position is an impossible one, and cannot last. A change is inevitable ; and it can only be in one of two directions. There are only two ways in which the younger nations can satisfy their national aspirations and exercise direct control over their destinies. The one is separation ; the other is Imperial partnership. They must either become absolutely independent States, conducting the whole of their external affairs without interference, and without help, or else they must become equal partners in a united Empire based on mutual support and joint responsibility. There can be no final solution which stops short of these two alternative conclusions. What does each of them involve ?

Severance involves for each of the younger nations, as for the Mother Country, a single-handed struggle against the whole world. There must be no shutting of eyes to the fact that, if the British nations once dis sever the constitutional pact that holds them together, no loose system of alliances can afford any permanent guarantee that they will not become, sooner or later, foreign nations

to each other, and foreign nations in the fullest sense of the term. They would be rivals in peace; enemies, or at the best neutrals, in time of war. Canada's industrial development would be a danger to England from which England would have to protect not only her own market, but that of her remaining Dependencies. The British Navy would be just as likely to be a menace as a support to Australian aspirations, and British, Canadian, Australian, and South African Ministers would intrigue against each other at Berlin, Washington, or Tokio. Hitherto the problem of existence has never seriously confronted the younger nations. It would soon confront them remorselessly if they stood alone. Canada feels the pressure of her great southern neighbour to-day; the pressure would become irresistible if Canada were isolated, and under it her independence, her cherished institutions, her whole proud and confident national spirit would disappear. Could the handful of Australians defend a continent against the armies of Japan? What would be the position of South Africa with Germany established at Lorenzo Marques? If even the existence of the colonial nations would be insecure under severance, the ambitions which they now legitimately entertain would be wholly beyond their reach. To realise her industrial ambitions Canada will require secure access to the raw materials of the tropics, and markets for the sale of her surplus production. How can she keep those markets open or make sure of those raw materials unless she has the political control of the regions concerned and the power to hold the seas? Empire and maritime power will be as vital to each of the younger nations in the future as they are to Great Britain in the present. But they will be unattainable for them, even at the cost of ruinous sacrifices, if they have to strive for them unaided. As for the United Kingdom, severance might leave her still possessed of her Dependencies and of her Navy; but it would leave

her without the power to maintain them against competitors who base their growing navies and their hopes of empire on a broader and more stable economic foundation than that furnished by a small island. A precarious independence, contracted ambitions, a heavy burden of armaments, and the constant dread of war—such is the maimed and crippled existence that each portion of the Empire can look forward to as the price of severance.

The alternative solution is Imperial unity on the basis of equal partnership. Imperial unity means the elimination of international conflict, and the substitution of constitutional negotiation and discussion between four hundred millions of men. It means for each constituent nation a hope of expansion and development infinitely greater than any to which it could aspire alone, and it ensures that development at a far smaller cost. For England it means the preservation of Empire and naval supremacy with a lightening of her burden. For each of the Colonies it means the acquisition of Empire and naval supremacy, with all they imply, at a cost far less than that which would be involved in the mere preservation of a narrow and stunted independence. For each of the younger nations Imperial partnership means a fuller and richer national life, greater power, less dependence upon others, than could be secured by separation or by transference to any other political union.

Assuming, then, that we desire Imperial unity and not disruption, what are the conditions essential to securing our object? The first and most essential of all is equality of constitutional status. It is the existing constitutional inequality which provides a constant motive force making towards disintegration, which continually creates the real inconveniences and sentimental grievances for which the nearest and easiest remedy at any one moment always is the assertion of local independence of action. Equality of status is the only principle on which the Empire can hold

together. The partnership must be a true partnership, not an arrangement based on subordination. But there can be no real equality without constitutional means to give effect to that equality. True partnership inevitably implies some deed of partnership: there can be no true Imperial partnership without some form of Imperial constitution. The partnership may be far-reaching or narrowly limited. But as long as it covers even a single function of Empire there must be some definite constitutional arrangement whereby each of the partners can always, and as a matter of right, exercise his control over that function. That arrangement may take the form of a written constitution. Or it may simply be embodied in the general consent of all the partners. In either event it must find expression through some common organ for consultation and decision. We have all come to realise that the present system of Imperial government, based on the supremacy of the United Kingdom, cannot last. What we have not realised sufficiently is that there must be some other definite system to take its place, if there is to be an Empire at all. The idea that a group of independent nations, each carrying on its own foreign policy in its own way, each making such naval and military preparations as suits its fancy at the moment, can either hold together in peace or survive in war, is one of those fatal delusions which spring from timid and incoherent thinking. Only an organic constitutional union can prevent the growing of forces of national life in the various parts of the Empire from seeking their outlet in centrifugal directions; only organic constitutional union can secure the efficient combination of those forces for the purpose of defence.

I know that in urging the case for constitutional union I am running counter to the established pessimism on the subject which has prevailed ever since the original failure of the Imperial Federation movement to make headway

twenty-five years ago. Only the other day so keen a worker in the cause of Imperial unity as Sir Gilbert Parker, in a paper read before this society, seemed to rule out any form of constitutional union as impracticable. Sir Gilbert Parker is a Canadian, old enough to remember the confederation of Canada. What practical difficulties are there in the way of Imperial union to-day greater than those which stood in the way of Canadian union forty years ago? If the inspired imagination of Sir John Macdonald could make a single closely-welded confederation of a number of scattered Colonies of diverse economic interests and diverse race, one of them separated by two thousand miles of unbridged wilderness from the rest, with no other common bond between them but the British Crown and the British Flag, are we to treat as hopeless any form of organic union whatever between five British nations joined by the sea, linked by common economic interests, and menaced by a common danger? It is easy enough to understand why the Imperial Federation movement failed twenty-five years ago. The conception of Imperial union was as splendid then as it is to-day. But there was no urgency behind it. There was no imminent danger from without, while within the confines of the Empire itself the question of partnership or severance was still an academic and not a practical issue. The world has changed since then. Imperial union to-day is not a matter of choice, but of necessity. The question is not whether some form of Imperial federation would be preferable to an existing system which works satisfactorily, but what form of Imperial union is indispensable to preserve us from imminent disintegration and imminent destruction?

What then are the essential and indispensable elements of an organic constitution for the Empire? There must be a single foreign policy for the Empire and a single administration responsible for the conduct of that policy. The outside world must deal with the British Empire as a unit, not as

a group of States to be played off against each other. And as foreign policy and defence are merely different aspects of one and the same problem of external relations, there must be a common policy of defence by sea and land, and a common provision of the expenditure involved in that defence. A common policy of defence does not necessarily imply administrative centralisation under a single Admiralty or a single War Office. It does, I think, imply a single organisation—Imperial Defence Committee, Imperial General Staff, Admiralty General Staff—to consider the problem of the Empire's defence as a whole and to decide both the kind and the extent of the measures required to cope with the situation. The revenue required to provide for those measures need not be collected by an Imperial tax-gatherer ; it need not come from any particular specified duties ; it need not even pass through any central exchequer. But it must be allotted to each part of the Empire in some definite proportion. Given the British principle of government by consent, it inevitably follows that there must be some body representative of the citizens of each partner State to which the Foreign Minister and his subordinates shall be responsible, which shall exercise control over the Imperial Defence Committee and the General Staffs dependent on it, and which, last but not least, shall decide the extent to which each partner shall contribute to the upkeep of the whole. This same body would also, on the principle of equal partnership in the Empire, exercise control over the administration of the dependent portions of the Empire.

I have said nothing about legislation. Uniform legislation on certain subjects for the whole of the Empire by a central Imperial Legislature may or may not be desirable. It is not essential, and for the moment I am confining myself to what is essential and indispensable—namely, the means of providing for the security of the Empire with the constitutional assent of the citizens of each self-governing

part of the Empire. Some form of Imperial Parliament, or responsible deliberative assembly, there must be. But the primary and essential purpose of its deliberations will be not the framing of laws, but the finding of ways and means to preserve the safety and integrity of the State, and the exercise of a general control over the Imperial departments which will be responsible to it.

How is such an assembly to be created? How is it to acquire its powers? How are those Imperial Ministers and departments which are at present subject to the Parliament and electorate of the United Kingdom to be transferred to its control? What existing institutions can be utilised as a nucleus or basis of the future Imperial assembly? What successive preliminary stages must be gone through before such an assembly comes into being or can be created by a deliberate effort to frame an Imperial constitution?

Of one point I am clearly convinced. And that is the impossibility of utilising the existing Parliament of the United Kingdom, or so-called Imperial Parliament, for the formation of our Imperial assembly. The admission of Colonial representatives to the British Parliament a hundred and fifty years ago might have averted the constitutional crisis which lost us the American colonies—in its essence exactly the same as the crisis confronting us to-day. Even seventy years ago their admission might have led to a process of evolution which might have converted the British Parliament into a true Imperial Parliament by the progressive increase of Colonial representation and progressive devolution of local affairs to local bodies. That is out of the question to-day. Apart from all practical inconveniences due to our party system, to the difficulty of deciding what questions the Colonial representatives should vote on, and to the impossibility of getting good men to come over as representatives, the decisive objection

is that any scheme taking the Parliament of this country as its starting-point is contrary to that principle of equality of political status on which the Dominions insist as the condition of any form of union. In any form of Imperial union that they will accept the United Kingdom must come in on the same footing as Canada or Australia. The only representative body that they will acknowledge as truly Imperial is one which bears the same relation to the Parliament of the United Kingdom as it does to the Parliament of any other partner State. This objection applies no less to the suggestion for admitting representatives of the Dominions to a reformed House of Lords than it does to their election to the House of Commons, though the practical difficulties in the way are fewer. Nor would the objection be got rid of by any form of devolution, or Home Rule all round, as is sometimes suggested, for that would still leave our Parliament charged with the common affairs of the United Kingdom. A devolution so complete as to take all United Kingdom affairs out of the present Parliament and only leave it with purely Imperial business might no doubt be constitutionally acceptable. But does any one suggest as a practical policy the setting up of a new United Kingdom Parliament side by side with the present British Parliament, leaving the latter *in vacuo* to do a limited amount of Imperial business at the cost of the United Kingdom taxpayer and wait for its gradual conversion into a truly Imperial Assembly? To my mind it seems inevitable that the new constitutional organ of Imperial unity must be something over and above the existing Parliaments, that its nucleus must be sought outside those Parliaments, and that it must grow gradually with the work it creates for itself, or takes over from the Parliament of the United Kingdom, up to the point when it becomes firmly established by custom or by a definite constitutional pact as the supreme Parliament of the Empire.

An idea which has found favour with many students of the problem is that the nucleus of the future Parliament of Empire might be found in some sort of advisory Council discussing the affairs of the Empire at large, and submitting its conclusions to the different Parliaments of the Empire for their decision. In some of the schemes based on this idea the Council would consist largely of nominated members, men of experience appointed by their Governments; in others there would be some form of election. The most interesting of these schemes, perhaps, is one propounded by Sir John Quick, which contemplates a Grand Assembly of Empire, composed of representatives elected in equal numbers by the Parliaments of each of the Dominions, and meeting every five years to consider matters requiring uniform or reciprocal legislation or uniform administrative action. The general idea underlying these schemes is that such a Council would gain steadily in authority and influence, and gradually become to all practical intents and purposes a Parliament of Empire, the interference of the separate local Parliaments on Imperial questions gradually declining to the possession of a rarely exercised veto. The weak point of most schemes of this character is that they do not allow sufficiently for the fact that advice, to have effect, must be responsible advice. Unless the advice is given by men who are in close and continuous touch with the portion of the Empire which they represent, who are able to speak authoritatively as the mouthpieces of public opinion in their State, and who are in a position to carry out in their own State the course they recommend to the other States, that advice will produce little effect. On the contrary, it may only embarrass the existing responsible local authorities and arouse their resentment. In fact, the very name of Council, harmless as it is, is in the minds of some of our overseas statesmen so closely identified with the idea of a collection of irresponsible enthusiasts and busybodies,

that its use is almost precluded if we wish to avoid misunderstandings.

None of the aforementioned objections apply to the consultative and deliberative meetings which constitute the Imperial Conference. The Imperial Conference is an assembly of representatives whose full political responsibility and authority cannot be questioned. The assembled Prime Ministers or Ministers are men who know that they cannot venture to propose anything or agree to anything which public opinion at home would not be prepared to accept, but who are also in a position, if the proposal is acceptable to their countrymen, to utilise the whole machinery of their Governments to translate their undertaking into action. The conclusions of the Conference have consequently been characterised by great caution, possibly even by timidity. But, as far as they have gone, they have also carried great weight and exercised a very decisive influence on Imperial affairs. It is to the resolutions adopted at successive Conferences that we owe the adoption of the principle of Imperial Preference by every one of the Dominions. And if that principle has not yet been accepted by this country, no one will dispute the importance it has assumed in our political controversies, a result entirely due to the impression produced on Mr. Chamberlain's mind by the Conferences of 1897 and 1902. Again, the Conferences of 1897, 1902, and 1907 showed a progressive development on the subject of Imperial Defence—a growing recognition on the part of the Dominions on the one hand of their duty to participate in the defence of the Empire, and on the other hand a gradual realisation on the part of the British authorities of the constitutional limitations under which that participation was possible, which led up to the very important special Conference on Defence which met last year. Even the Conference of 1907, though inconclusive in some respects, marked a very important

advance in the definite recognition of the equality of political status between the different Governments of the Empire.

On this question of political status the Conference of 1907 may be said to have established the general principle. It remains for the forthcoming Conference of 1911 to make that principle still clearer by two further steps. The first is that the supreme importance of the Conference as the highest deliberative Assembly in the Empire should be recognised by the formal presidency of the Conference being vested, not in any one of the assembled Prime Ministers, but in His Majesty the King. It would only be in keeping with the keen interest King George has always shown in all that concerns Imperial Union if he were to open the Conference of 1911 in person. The second step necessary to get rid of the last vestige of the old Colonial relationship of subordination to a British administrative department is to separate the office of Minister for Imperial Affairs from the administration of the Crown Colonies and Dependencies. The right person to deal with inter-Imperial relations is either the Prime Minister himself or his deputy in the shape of a Secretary for Imperial Affairs, an office which could be conveniently and appropriately combined with the existing position of Lord President of the Council. This would only be completing that division between the work of administering the Crown Colonies and of corresponding with the Dominions on which Mr. Deakin laid such stress in 1907. His spirited protest resulted in a partial reorganisation of the Colonial Office by the establishment within that office of what is now known as the Dominions Department. But it would be an enormous step forward towards Imperial union if the Dominions once knew that the transaction of their affairs had been taken out of the Colonial Office altogether and entrusted to a real Imperial Office with a new tradition and an outlook corresponding to the altered constitutional relation.

There is, further, a very important field of Imperial affairs—the most important of all in many respects—to which the scope of the Conference's deliberations should be extended, and that is the field of Imperial foreign policy. It is true that British policy in regard to the New Hebrides and the Newfoundland Fisheries dispute was discussed in 1907, but the issues raised were treated from the purely local aspect, and there was no practical recognition of the right of the Dominions to have a voice in the general conduct of our foreign policy. A full statement at next year's Conference by the Foreign Secretary, reviewing the whole course and meaning of British foreign policy since 1907, and followed by an exhaustive private discussion, would mark a very important constitutional advance, and is a point for which all believers in Imperial partnership should press.¹

With the inclusion of foreign affairs within the purview of its deliberations, and with the final regularisation of its status, the Imperial Conference ought by next year to have reached a settled constitutional position. The next step is to increase its effectiveness. At present the Conference meets once in four years for a few days. In those few days it can only deal with generalities ; it has neither the time nor the material to hand for the effective discussion of any question involving points of detail. In the long intervals its existence is practically suspended. How are we to secure the continuity and the adequate preparation which are essential if the Conference is to be a really governing factor in Imperial affairs ? The suggestion which, so far, has met with most favour is the establishment of a permanent Secretariat to the Conference charged with the task of keeping up touch between its members in the interval and of preparing the subjects for each approaching Conference in such a fashion that they may admit of settlement

¹ Such a statement was made at the Conference by Sir E. Grey, and its constitutional significance was at once universally recognised.

after comparatively short discussion. The suggestion is attractive, but not without difficulties. If the Secretariat is only responsible to a body which meets once in four years there is a certain danger, exaggerated perhaps, but undoubtedly real, of its getting out of hand. Able men wishing to make their office a success might by the discussions they initiated and by the way in which they prepared subjects for the Conference attempt to prejudge their decision. On the other hand, the compromise accepted in 1907 of a Secretariat directly under the Colonial Office, and without initiative, has resulted in practically nothing being done. The Secretariat has been in no sense a separate institution inside the Colonial Office, and the task of carrying out its important duties has in fact been combined with the direction of one of the hardest worked departments of the office, the South African Department, a clear indication of its relative unimportance from the official point of view.

The only true solution, to my mind, of the difficulty caused by the long intervals between the meeting of the Conference and by the shortness of its discussions is that the Conference should meet more often and give more time to its work. The Prime Ministers themselves may not be able to get together more than once in four years; but there is no reason why they should not be represented at the intervening meetings by trusted deputies. The British Prime Minister already has such a deputy in the Colonial Secretary—or Imperial Secretary as he will, I hope, shortly become—whose position as the mouthpiece and representative of the British Government is explicitly recognised in the constitution of the Conference. There is no reason why each of the other Prime Ministers should not have a similar deputy, or ‘alternate,’ to use a term familiar to City men. That position might possibly be occupied by the High Commissioner or permanent representative of the Dominion in London. But, personally, I think it had fair

better be held by a member of the Cabinet of the Dominion represented. The suggestion that each Dominion Cabinet should include a special Minister for Imperial and External Affairs was made by Mr. Sanford Evans some years ago in an interesting work on the part played by Canada in the South African War, and is in fact being tentatively adopted in Australia and Canada. Such a Minister would be in much closer touch with his colleagues in the Cabinet, and with the Parliament of which he will presumably be a member, than any High Commissioner whose other duties keep him permanently in England and who has hitherto, at any rate, been selected for general capacity and personal distinction rather than for intimate association with the Government of the day in his Dominion.

A conference between the Imperial Secretary of this country and the corresponding Ministers for Imperial Affairs in the other Dominions would have all the authority and responsibility upon which I have already insisted as essential to any deliberative Imperial body which is to exercise a really effective influence. Provision for its meeting is already made by the first resolution at the Conference of 1907, which provided for the holding of subsidiary Conferences, and there would be no difficulty about its being convened for several weeks in every year. During those weeks the Conference could go thoroughly into many questions of detail, such as emigration, mail and telegraphic communication, questions of trade and shipping, etc., of which a large number were raised at the last Imperial Conference, only to be dropped for want of time to get to real business or come to any conclusion. More important still, it could hold a regular series of meetings with the Defence Committee and with the Foreign Minister, and so enable the Dominions to acquire a normal and continuous influence over the course of our whole external policy in its double aspect of negotiation and armed preparation.

The effect produced by the existing occasional Conferences, both in actual concrete results and in influencing the trend of thought on Imperial subjects, has already been very great. It would be far greater if the Conference were almost continuous, and if there were not only more adequate discussion of practical issues, but a continuous carrying backwards and forwards of political ideas between the various Governments and Parliaments of the Empire.

With the development of the Conference into an annual institution the difficulty of securing an efficient Secretariat would automatically disappear. A body meeting for some weeks every year, and with plenty of work on hand, would neither let its secretarial staff get out of control nor allow it to degenerate into a mere name. My own conception of how the secretarial or office arrangements of the Conference might work out is somewhat as follows : With the separation of the office of Imperial Secretary from that of the Colonial Secretary the whole office staff of the former would practically be engaged on secretarial work for the Conferences, and the need for the creation of a separate Secretariat would disappear. But it would be eminently desirable that the building which housed the new Imperial Office should provide a separate suite of rooms for the representative of each Dominion, and that each representative should have permanently in those rooms a clerical staff sufficient to deal with his work while he is in London and with such work as he may instruct it to do during his absence. Part at least of that staff would consist of officials whom he would originally bring with him from his own department overseas. But the actual administrative and disciplinary control of the whole office would be vested in the British Imperial Secretary, and with the gradual free transference of men from one department to another the whole office would acquire a thoroughly Imperial character. From the first the several Governments would pay the salaries of those

members of the staff who were attached to their representatives, and possibly also contribute to the upkeep of the building. Eventually the whole office would be provided for by the Conference funds, and would thus become the nucleus of a real Imperial Civil Service.

I have already more than once laid stress on the importance of any body which deliberates on Imperial affairs being in close touch with the citizens of every part of the Empire, and in a position to give effect locally to its recommendations. It is for that reason that I believe the development of the Conference system is likely to lead to far better results than the creation of any specially nominated or elected advisory Council. But even the Conference is seriously defective in these respects. The Ministers assembled at the Conference may very readily feel disposed to recommend or accept certain conclusions which seem reasonable and even essential when looked at from the Imperial point of view and in the atmosphere of Imperial sentiment. But as practical politicians they know that prejudices and prepossessions which seem to them unreasonable from the Imperial point of view are often very strong locally, and as party leaders they are in constant alarm lest those prejudices should be exploited by disloyal colleagues or by an ever-watchful and not always over-scrupulous Opposition. They are consequently afraid of bold decisions, especially of any decision that involves expenditure or that might be twisted by opponents, however unreasonably, into a surrender of local autonomy. This weakness is likely to show itself in an increasing degree as the Conference is faced with more serious practical issues than it has yet grappled with. It is desirable that some means should be found of counteracting this weakness, of disarming adverse criticism at home, or, at any rate, of insuring for the Ministers at the Conference a greater measure of Parliamentary support when they return than

they can reckon upon under present conditions. The simplest means to that end would be that the Prime Ministers attending the full Imperial Conference should each be accompanied by a deputation or delegation of members of Parliament, chosen by either or both Houses of the Dominion Parliament on some proportionate principle which would admit of the equitable representation of all political parties. The delegates would presumably not take part in the discussions of the Conference, which are discussions between executive Governments. But they would meet together, with a similar delegation from the United Kingdom Parliament, to discuss the resolutions arrived at by the Conference, which would then be submitted to them for their approval. In the same atmosphere of Imperial deliberation and Imperial sentiment as the members of the Conference themselves, the delegates would naturally tend to take the same views, and, once committed to those views by speech and vote, would not so easily be tempted to turn round under the influence of local prejudices or of considerations of personal or party advantage when they return. The members of the Conference would thus be able to act both with greater confidence and greater certainty, and the effectiveness of the Conference as an institution would be enormously increased.

The introduction of Parliamentary delegations would, of course, be a very distinct departure from anything that has been done so far. Experience has shown that such departures are often best made when there is some other reason for making them besides the actual business which it may be desired to forward. The Conference itself originated with the Jubilee celebrations of 1887 and 1897, and the tradition of its connection with such solemn national occasions was strengthened by Mr. Chamberlain's selection of King Edward's Coronation for a Conference in 1902, and will be emphasised again by the coincidence of next year's

Conference with the Coronation of King George. Why should not that Coronation be made the occasion for calling *together representatives of all the free Parliaments of the Empire to attend the formal inauguration of a reign destined, we all believe, to be of such momentous significance for the whole future of the Empire?* The solemn ceremony of Coronation, bringing deeply home to all who attend it the great ideas of Imperial unity and historical continuity personified in the Crown, is one to which the members of the Empire's Parliaments might well be summoned in any case, quite apart from any useful purpose their coming might fulfil in connection with the deliberations of the Imperial Conference. We may confidently hope that King George as sovereign will still be able to do what he has done as Prince of Wales, and visit the various Parliaments of the Empire in person. Meanwhile, why should not the King's 'faithful commons' from each part of the Empire meet in Grand Assembly to do honour to his crowning? ¹

Once such an Assembly of Parliamentary delegations had met, its usefulness as an adjunct to the Conference would immediately be recognised. The growth of its influence and importance would also be assured, above all when questions of finance came to be discussed. Before long the Conference and the Assembly would constitute a deliberative body not very far removed from a true Parliament of Empire. It would be a body less concerned with legislation than with common action, and its two Houses would represent on the one side the executive governments who have to carry out any action, and on the other the representatives of the people whose assent to action or to the raising of revenue is indispensable. It would still not be a true Parliament of Empire as long as the purely Imperial depart-

¹ The suggestion here outlined was taken up by a committee of members of Parliament, and representative delegations from the Dominion Parliaments took part in the Coronation ceremonies.

ments of State—namely, the Foreign Office, the Defence Committee with its General Staff branches, and the administration of the Dependencies—remained outside its absolute legal control and under the control of the United Kingdom Parliament, and as long as its resolutions had no binding authority on the Empire as a whole. To surmount that last step some definite act of Constitution-making will, in my belief, become essential. But such an act, impossible to-day, will be much more possible and much more obvious when the outlines of a Constitution will be in existence, when the work to be done will have gradually grown in volume and importance and become more clearly dissociated from local affairs, and, above all, when the men will be there who will have become accustomed to dealing with that work and to deliberating on Imperial affairs in an Imperial spirit. What precise shape the Constitution of the Empire will then take is a matter which need not concern us now. What I have endeavoured to suggest are some of the practical steps which in the next decade or two may bring us to a position in which the indispensable minimum of an Imperial Constitution will no longer be a dream, but a concrete, established fact.

So far I have only indicated certain possible ways of dealing with the constitutional problem directly, certain devices for easing the course of constitutional development. But the rapidity of that development must, of course, depend in the main on a number of factors bearing more or less directly on the whole problem of union. The first and most important of these is the factor of external pressure. It is the growing menace to the security of every part of the Empire from the expansion of other Powers which daily enforces the lesson of union upon each and all of us. That factor is no doubt largely outside our control. But what is in our control is the power of enlisting the interest and co-operation of the rest of the Empire in dealing with

that factor. If we have to run risks in the conduct of our foreign policy let them be run for interests which are common to the Empire as a whole and for reasons which all the Empire can recognise and approve. The other day Sir Wilfrid Laurier said that there might be British wars, such as the Crimean War, which Canada might decide not to participate in. I do not wish to enter into the constitutional controversy which his remark precipitated in Canada. All I will say is that the Crimean War belonged to a phase of British foreign policy which has, I trust, passed away. If our foreign policy is truly Imperial and not merely English and European, we shall not find ourselves involved in any war which the Empire as a whole will not approve and which it will not be prepared to see through with all its strength.

To secure real unity of purpose in dealing with the work of the Empire, whether in foreign affairs or in defence, or in the administration of the Dependencies, it is not enough to bring the younger nations into mere official consultation and agreement as to the policy to be adopted. It is no less essential to get them to join in the actual work, to learn to understand it from inside, to take pride in it, to love it. If we really mean to bring about a true Imperial partnership we must begin by seeing that the Imperial administration is an administration manned by all the citizens of the Empire and not by the inhabitants of the United Kingdom only. We must take active steps to enlist the best brains and ambition of the younger nations in the work of the Foreign and Diplomatic service, in the government of India and the Crown Colonies and Dependencies, in the Army and Navy. We, in this country, have a very real knowledge of and interest in the administrative problems of the Empire. There is scarcely a family in the upper and middle classes that has not some member—often all its members—in one or other of the great Imperial

services. We hear these problems discussed with knowledge, and we know that they concern our brothers or friends personally and directly. But how can the Dominions be expected to be interested in India, to regard Indian problems from a sympathetic point of view, or to be ready to show a spirit of moderation and compromise in any conflict of interests or views that may arise between them and India, if they have never been brought into direct touch with Indian administration or come to share the pride in it which almost every Englishman feels? Conversely, too, how can Indian administrators ever come to an intelligent realisation of the difficulties of young communities of white men face to face with such a question as Indian immigration if none of them have ever lived in the Colonies affected?

In the matter of defence we have already made a beginning, thanks largely to the efforts of Mr. Haldane at the Conference of 1907. But the system of interchange between officers of the different forces of the Crown is in need of far wider extension than anything that has yet been contemplated. And the ideal of a great Imperial General Staff, for which Mr. Haldane secured the approval of the Conference of 1907, to be really effective needs to be carried out on a far larger scale, and to be carried out independently of the General Staff in the British War Office with which the Imperial General Staff is at present confused.

Of the very first importance again in helping forward the constitutional union of the Empire is any step that may be taken to develop the community of economic interest between the different parts. I do not propose even to touch upon the controversy which has been raised by the proposal to strengthen the economic links of Empire by a system of Imperial preference. What all I think will agree about, apart from any particular method proposed, is that anything which will give the various parts of the Empire

a greater common interest to defend, and a greater practical concern in the welfare of every other part, anything which facilitates inter-Imperial transportation and communication, which enables the citizens of the Empire more easily to meet each other, or, at any rate, to learn all about each other's daily doings through the Press, must be of enormous influence in paving the way towards Imperial Union.

And that brings me to the last point of all—the education of the citizens of the Empire in the great idea of Imperial Unity. All the various steps, direct or indirect, towards constitutional union which I have suggested to-night are of real value only in so far as they help to provide opportunities for the strengthening and spreading of that idea. But the idea can and must be conveyed directly as well. It can be taught in our schools. It can be taught in our songs, in our books, in our journals. It can shine through every speech and every act of our public men. There is no British subject so humble that his or her influence cannot help to kindle and strengthen it in others. And once the Empire can be made to exist as an inward vision and a sure faith in the hearts and minds of the great body of its citizens, nothing can prevent its realisation as an outward and visible fact, no power on earth can crush it out of existence.

III

THE IMPERIAL SERVICES¹

THE question which has been set down for our discussion to-night is, of course, only a part of the general problem of Imperial Union, but it is a part of very considerable importance, and a part that I think is sometimes overlooked in discussions of this problem. What is that problem as stated in its simplest terms—the problem of bringing the self-governing Dominions into the government of the British Empire? At present that government, whether you look upon it as a burden, or as a responsibility, or as a privilege, or as a material advantage, in whatever aspect you regard it, is the monopoly of the forty-four million people who inhabit the United Kingdom. It is entirely outside the thirteen millions, soon to be thirty millions, of the younger nations. The forty-four millions of the United Kingdom pay something like two-thirds of the cost of the defence and maintenance of the British Empire. The remainder is paid by India and the other Dependencies of the Crown, but the thirteen millions of people in the self-governing Dominions only contribute a very small proportion of the cost of maintaining the British Empire. On the other hand, the forty-four million people of this country control the whole external policy of the Empire. They decide the great issues of peace and war. They shape the whole of our foreign policy. They govern, practically, the whole of the dependent parts of the Empire, with the

¹ An address delivered at a meeting of the Imperial Co-operation League on June 22, 1910.

exception of some native districts in the South African Colonies, and a few native reservations in New Zealand, Canada and Australia ; govern them in accordance with their notions, sometimes in accordance with their fads. The thirteen millions in the Dominions have no part in the government of the dependent Empire, which, as far as any direct control or immediate interest of theirs is concerned, might just as well be the territory of some foreign Power. These are two aspects of the question that, of course, are very freely discussed, and as to the solution of the problem we are all agreed. We know that any stable form of Imperial Union must be based on the Dominions taking their share in bearing the burden of the Empire, and on the Dominions taking a share in the government of the Empire, acquiring a voice with it in the control of our foreign and Imperial policy.

But the point which I wish to dwell upon to-night is this : The forty-four million people of this country not only pay the cost of governing the greater part of the Empire, and in return for that have the control of the Imperial policy ; they also get all the advantages, direct and indirect, which come from the great administrative services of the Empire. We may look at this in various ways. It is easy to see all we spend upon the upkeep of the Army and the Navy, but it is equally essential to remember all we get back out of that expenditure. The actual armaments alone constitute an enormous stimulus to a great number of our industries ; they employ a large number of men year after year in highly skilled work. They are a useful flywheel in our industrial machinery. Then you have the large expenditure on salaries in connection with the Diplomatic Services, the Consular Services, the Army, and the Navy, amounting to a very large total of money distributed among the people of these islands. Besides these salaries, which are provided by the taxpayers of this country, the

Imperial Services provide opportunities for employing a very large number of Englishmen who are not paid for by the taxpayers. There is the whole of the British Army in India—which is staffed by English officers. There are British officers incorporated in the Egyptian army ; there is the whole Civil Service of India, and other Government Services—the Services of the Crown Colonies. In one way or another, I do not think I am exaggerating if I say that the dependent Empire, outside of England, pays something like £10,000,000 a year in salaries to various classes of Englishmen in the military and administrative services. That is a very considerable thing for England. It means a tremendous benefit for Englishmen in many walks of life. More than that, it has very valuable indirect results. Undoubtedly the class of man who is created by the great Imperial Services is a national asset of the greatest value. He brings something into the whole fabric of our national and public life which we could ill afford to lose. People have sometimes smiled on the retired Indian Civilian who takes an active part in municipal politics, or even in Parliament, but I am sure these men do contribute a very valuable element by their special knowledge, and by the judicial temper they bring to the administration of affairs. It is one of the things that makes us a nation of rulers, and it is a thing that we cannot afford to sacrifice. Now that thing our fellow-countrymen in the Dominions have not got. You will not find, if you go to a great country like Canada, many men who have been in the Foreign Services, the Indian Civil Service, or who have knocked about the world as soldiers or sailors, and know what British effort and British rule mean. In fact, there is a large element that is essential to our life here that one misses in the Dominions. It seems to me that in any permanent Imperial Union they have a right to have a proportionate share in these advantages ; a proportionate share of the actual salaries

and careers in the Empire, and also, what is far more valuable, a share in that greater national life, that part of national character which comes from having among them, to benefit their own population, the class of men I have mentioned.

Well, of course, I know there is a simple answer to all that ; one of those answers that is so logical, and so thoroughly unsatisfactory, and that is, that when the Dominions like to pay their share of the upkeep of the Empire, then they can begin to ask for their share in the administrative services. Now, I admit that in certain services, and up to a certain point, that solution may work out. It is possible, for instance, up to a certain point, to develop your defence system by separate naval and military administrations working in co-operation. In so far as the Dominions are able to build up a military service, and build up the rudiments of a navy, they will be opening up a career for young men in those services, and through a system of interchange between those services, with the services in this country, you may gradually get a truly Imperial and yet national force in different portions of the Empire, paid for by each portion, and yet providing a sure career for any citizen of the Empire who chooses to enter. Still, that cannot apply to the government of the Dependencies, or to our Diplomatic and Consular Services. You cannot divide India among the Dominions. You cannot divide up the Diplomatic Service. You must have a single administration in those cases. Now, what I contend is that you cannot wait until the Dominions take their full part in the control of Indian and foreign policy before letting them have a share in the administration, and this is my reason : If we want to bring about Imperial Union, we must get the Dominions interested in Imperial policy, and the obstacle to their having that true interest, and a true understanding of that policy, is that their people take no part in the actual work of con-

ducting it. It is difficult for us to realise how the Imperial service permeates our life through and through. Here in London, every politician, every journalist, every writer, is being continuously brought in contact with the men who do the work of the Empire, whether as soldiers or as sailors, or as diplomatists, or as administrators of native peoples. There is hardly a family throughout England which has not got some relative, some friend, some member who has not taken part in one way or another in the government of the Empire.

When one considers the amount of knowledge and interest in Imperial affairs that animate the British people, it is something very wonderful indeed. It is often said that democracy is unfitted to govern an Empire. I do not hold that view at all. What I do think is that if you impose upon the democracy the task of trying to work the government of the Empire through the same machinery as that which is used for local politics, undoubtedly you must often get unfortunate results. But I think, if you can once divide the government of the Empire from local affairs, you will find that the British democracy is perfectly capable of taking a sane, steady, and consistent view of the conduct of Imperial policy.

Let me remind you that this influence and this knowledge of Imperial administration did not always exist in this country. There was a time, sixty or seventy years ago, when undoubtedly the administration of the Empire was the monopoly of one aristocratic class. The commercial classes took practically no part in the government of the Empire. Their sons only to a very small extent took places in the Army and the Navy, took very little part in the government of the Colonies and Dependencies. It is essential to keep that fact in mind in order to understand the attitude of Cobden and the Manchester School of Little Englanders. It was only as the doors of the great

administrative services were thrown open to a wider class of Englishmen that they got that knowledge of Imperial affairs which has played its part in causing the Little Englander to disappear and the Imperial view to take root and grow as it has done. At present the administration of the Empire is open practically to every citizen of this country. Through our system of County Council Scholarships, and the open Civil Service Examinations, it is possible for any boy in any rank of life to step into the Imperial Service and rise to the highest positions.

Now the situation as regards the Dominions to-day is, in many respects, what it was with regard to the middle classes sixty years ago. How can we expect them to take a real interest in the Empire if they do not take an active part in the work? How can you expect the ordinary Canadian to understand or take an interest in the foreign policy of the Empire? He has never come across a single British diplomatist; he does not know what these men are like or what their aims or views are. How can he sympathise with the true meaning of the task we have undertaken in India if he has never seen the men who do the work? Many of our Canadian, Australian, or South African fellow-subjects have a vague idea that we exercise a brutal tyranny over unwilling subjects in India, but if they or their brothers and friends had to undertake part of that work, and help to solve some of the problems there, I do not think they would hold that view. Nor would they be so offhand, as they sometimes are, in their treatment of questions which affect India. You must also take the converse. At present the Indian Civil Service is entirely run by Englishmen, who have no notions of the problems of a young country. They look upon South Africa or Canada as though they were some other Dependency of the same nature as India. They cannot understand, for instance, why South Africa should not open its doors to

Indian immigrants. If, as I said, a certain number of men from the Dominions were included in the Indian Civil Service, the whole of that service would acquire a better comprehension of such a problem, and, on the other hand, the same fact would have a very salutary effect upon the Dominion Governments in their treatment of the problem. In every way I think you would get a real interest in Imperial problems, a realisation of the immense possibilities of the Empire, which would make the Dominions far more ready to join in bearing the burdens of the Empire and ready to take responsibility for those problems whose full bearing they hardly understand at present.

I dare say that many of you have been thinking of an answer to be given to all that I have said. Probably you would say : ' Why, the door is open to the Dominions. Every British subject has a right to be nominated to those posts where nomination is required, or to present himself at any of the examinations which may be appointed.' That is true in a sense, but it is absolutely illusory. Let us look at the thing from the practical point of view. These examinations fit in absolutely and perfectly with our public school and university system. It is perfectly possible for anybody to do his ordinary work at Oxford or Cambridge without a thought of anything afterwards, and when his University days are over, a few weeks of extra cramming will enable him to present himself for examination for the Indian Civil Service, with every prospect of passing, if, in his ordinary work he is a good second- or first-class man. If he does pass, there he is with a career before him. If he does not pass, he has lost nothing at all, no expense or time beyond the few stuffy days passed in Burlington House, or wherever the examination is now held. The whole of his schooling comes in useful ; his attention is not diverted from anything else ; he is no less fitted for any other career in England than he may otherwise think of, whether it be

the Bar or the profession of schoolmaster, or any other profession. Now look at the thing from the point of view of the parents of a boy in Australia or New Zealand. They know they have not the same opportunity for teaching him and preparing him for that examination. They know the immense expense, as well as other difficulties, involved in sending him over here. There can, of course, be no certainty that he will pass; there is the certainty that if he fails he will find himself unfitted for ordinary civil life in his own country. So there is no real equality in the matter of examinations. The same applies to nominations. It is quite true in theory that the ordinary Australian or New Zealand parent can get his son appointed in Nigeria or to other appointments under the Colonial Office. But in practice one knows that nominations are given through personal acquaintance and personal contact. They are given to the people who are in touch with the actual officials who live in London or England where the opportunities of getting these nominations are before them.

How is that difficulty to be got over? One suggestion that has been made is, that the examinations for the Imperial Services should be held simultaneously all over the Empire. The suggestion was made as far back as 1887, and the Civil Service Commissioners at the time pointed out various reasons against carrying out any such proposals. They mentioned the fact that, of course, an important part of the examination is *viva voce*, and, therefore, it would be impossible for the examinations to be held in different parts of the Empire at the same time, except by the appointment of different examiners, which would at once introduce an element of uncertainty into the reports. Then there would be great delay in declaring the results, and that would make it difficult for the students to set to work at their preliminary training before going out to take up their appointments. I think there is a good deal in

those objections. But there is another objection which the Civil Service Commissioners did not mention, and it is even of greater importance than the others as far as the Indian Civil Service is concerned. If you held the examination on a single list, I think you would be bound to hold it in India as well, and you might then have the whole of your Indian Civil Service flooded by clever young Babus who are able to cram up. That would be a disastrous result to the efficiency of government in India. At the same time it does seem rather hard if, in order to keep out your Babus from the government in India, you are forced to keep out your Canadian, your Australian, and your New Zealander as well. What underlies the thing to my mind is a false conception of the value of examinations. The value of examination is very real and very great under certain conditions. One of the conditions under which competitive examinations are held in England is that certain qualities of government such as resource, self-reliance, honesty, impartiality, energy, may all be taken for granted in the bulk of the candidates. And, therefore, given those qualities, your examinations will bring out the ablest intellectually out of a larger number, all of whom are presumed to be responsible, energetic, and fair-minded young Englishmen. But when you are examining Indians, you cannot presuppose these qualities which you find in the average Englishman, and which are the most important for the purposes of administration, and you may run the risk of getting a man who may be more intelligent than many of the English candidates, but who lacks the other qualities which are far more important than those which show themselves in the examinations. Therefore, I certainly feel inclined to agree with the view held by the Civil Service Commissioners twenty years ago, and I fancy still held by them, that the holding of a series of concurrent examinations for Imperial administration is out of the question.

There is another suggestion which they put aside as involving an alteration in the Act by which appointments to the Indian Civil Service are made, and that is the appointment of a certain number by each Dominion. Of course, the Commissioners are not people who can alter the Acts under which they are appointed to carry on their work. But we are perfectly free to consider the question whether the Act should not be altered in order to make it possible to have men appointed by nomination from different parts of the Empire to the Indian Civil Service. That could be done after examination in their own country, an examination suited to their educational methods, which could be arranged with their Universities, and with any other tests as to moral character, etc., that it might be desirable to impose. They would be simply presented by their Government as having passed a certain standard. They could then, if required, come to England for a further course before taking up their appointments. I do not see any reason why a number of places in the Indian Civil Service should not be reserved for Canada, South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand. The great Colonial Civil Service will, sooner or later, require to be reorganised, and there is room there for the building up of a Civil Service quite as large and as capable, as well organised, and as well paid as the Indian Civil Service. There is an immense field there, as well as in the Foreign Office and in the Diplomatic and Consular Services, and there is no insuperable or practical difficulty in a scheme of that sort.

On a small scale it has been worked for many years already. Two Canadian cadets are nominated directly to the Royal Engineers every year by Kingston College, and they have, I think, been throughout a success. They have included a very great number of distinguished officers, and I do not suppose you could get any other education establishment in this country to turn out a larger number of

successful officers than Kingston. In the same way a certain number of cadets are accepted from the Dominions for nomination in the Navy. There seems to my mind to be no really serious reasons why that principle should not be extended. After all, the educational establishments of the Dominions are of a very high standard to-day. No one could say that M'Gill is a second-class University. The same is true of the great Australian Universities, and possibly even if the actual standard of scholarship and learning were a little bit lower than it is here, I am not sure you would not get certain compensating qualities of freshness and vigour, and an unbiassed way of looking at things, which, in the long run, would fully compensate you for anything you might lose in the other respects. And the same thing applies to the Foreign Office. I do not think you will find, however much diplomatists may shake their heads at first, that your Canadian or Australian *attachés* would prove a weakness in your foreign administration. On the contrary, I think you are likely to get some men of remarkable ability, who will introduce a new life into the whole of a service which is said to be somewhat sleepy in its methods.

I think I have said enough to start the discussion this evening. What I feel is that whatever objections may be made, and whatever difficulties may be pointed out, the fact we have got to face is that we are not going to survive as England. We can only survive as a united Empire. If we are to be a united Empire, we must follow the principles on which alone such an Empire can be based to their logical conclusion. The administration of a united Empire must be carried out by the whole of the governing portions of that Empire, and not by men taken exclusively from these islands.

IV

IMPERIAL DEFENCE AND NATIONAL POLICY¹

THE subject of Imperial Defence is one that is being continually discussed in magazine articles and in the columns of our daily newspapers. Schemes of Army reform without number, controversies between naval and military experts as to the possibilities of invading England, are worn thread-bare with discussion. The intention of the present article is not so much to go into any of these detailed questions, as to consider some of the main factors involved in the problem of defence, and the manner in which that problem is affected by Imperialism ; in other words, by the conception of the Empire as our national unit.

Defence, rightly regarded, is an essential aspect of national life, and bears on every manifestation of that life. Unfortunately, in this country the fatal habit of thinking in compartments—begotten of intellectual weakness or sloth—has grown so strong that we habitually think of defence as a separate problem, entirely disconnected with the general problem of our national life, and with our political and social system. So completely, indeed, have we, as a nation, been dominated by this slovenly habit of thought, that even the most obvious external elements of our machinery of defence have been considered absolutely without reference to each other. It is only lately that we have even begun to acknowledge that naval and military

¹ Originally contributed as a chapter in Mr. C. S. Goldman's *The Empire and the Century* (John Murray, 1905).

defence are only parts of one problem. We are still very far from having translated that acknowledgment into practice. As for making our foreign policy and our political negotiations fit in with our defensive measures, that is a conception of peace strategy which we are still a long way from attaining. The South African War, and the war in the Far East, have provided us with signal examples of the unfortunate results which may follow from neglecting to make political negotiations and military preparations fit in with each other ; but there are no indications, as yet, that we intend to benefit by them. It is essential that we should get rid of this vicious attitude of mind, and endeavour to realise that not only our naval and military preparations but our foreign and domestic policy, our political and social customs, our industries, the distribution of our territories, of our population, and of our trade, all have their defence aspect, and form part of the general problem of defence. It is no less essential, of course, to recognise the converse of this assertion. We must remember that defence has no purpose and no meaning apart from the other aspects of national life. The object of defence is to preserve our territories, to protect the growth of our material wealth, and, still more important, to secure the maintenance and development of our social and political well-being, of our national traditions, and of our national character. The truth is that between the different factors of national life it is impossible to draw hard and fast partitions. Each is continually interacting upon the other. The territory and wealth that need to be defended are, from another point of view, but the instruments with which defence is carried on. The political and social freedom and stability which we prize, and for the sake of which our State is most worth defending, are, at the same time, the most effective means of securing the full development of national power in time of war. The war in the Far East has brought out clearly the intimate

connection between these two aspects of the same question. Russia's weakness in the field is but the reflex of the internal weakness of her constitution. The efficiency and devotion of the Japanese army are but the outward signs of a nation that is well governed and inspired by patriotism. Again, the moral qualities most valuable for the purposes of national defence—i.e. self-sacrifice, courage, constancy—are, from another point of view, just those essentials of national character which make a nation worth preserving. And regarding the problem of defence from this point of view, we begin to realise that defence need not be a diversion of the national energies from higher and better aims—a mere payment of insurance, necessary, perhaps, but essentially undesirable—but can be used as a motive power and a stimulus in the development towards a higher form of national organisation.

This truth was more fully realised by the original builders of the British Empire than it is to-day. For them foreign relations, defence, and industrial and commercial development formed but one single policy—a policy of which each part was intended to support and stimulate the other. Our ancestors fostered trade and industry deliberately for the sake of national security. But they were not content with fostering them in a general haphazard fashion. They regulated them strictly, regardless sometimes of immediate commercial profit, but always with an eye to the main objects of national greatness and national security. The real motive of the navigation laws was not shipping trade, but naval supremacy. To that object of naval supremacy, again, our whole trade with Northern Europe was subordinated. Subsequently, when we began to find that it was not altogether safe to rely upon the Baltic for our naval stores, we deliberately encouraged in our American Colonies the industries that, in those days, were essential to shipbuilding. In the same spirit, too, the whole of our export and import

trade was regulated in order to secure an excess of exports, and thus accumulate the precious metals in this country. This policy was not the outcome of mere mistaken economics, but the result of intelligent preparation for war. It was that policy which enabled us to carry on wars on a large scale in Europe. In the days when all armies were hired, we hired not only the raw material of armies, but the finished article—the whole military strength of a state like Prussia, and the military genius of a Frederick.

All these measures, whose primary object was national defence, tended no less towards national prosperity, even though, at any particular moment, they may have seemed to restrict the freedom of economic development. The navigation laws created British shipping. The desire to force exports led to the continuous concentration of thought upon the fostering and stimulating of new industries and the improvement of old ones, and thus laid the foundations of England's industrial greatness. The desire to secure the control of the raw materials of those industries, and to develop new and sure markets for their products, led to the acquisition of our Colonial Empire, and stimulated its development. It has often been said that the British Empire sprang up unconsciously as a result of British trade, that our defence policy was based on our trade interests, and that our wars were the outcome of trade disputes. But it is at least equally true that British trade and the British Empire were created for the sake of national defence. It was from the desire to protect England—English liberty and English Protestantism—against the greater wealth and power of the Continental States, more especially France, that our statesmen looked abroad and ahead, and, in a far truer sense than Canning, called a new world into being to redress the balance of the old—a new world of colonial expansion, naval power, and industrial development.

In their actual conduct of war, no less than in their peace strategy, the clear grasp of our statesmen can be seen. No 'blue water' doctrinarianism, no theory of passive military defence, blinded them to the great fact that wars to be fought successfully must be fought offensively, and cannot be confined to one element alone. The intimate interaction of naval and military warfare in England's wars is often obscured from us by the fact that most of the work on land was done by our allies. Skilful foreign policy, helped by liberal subventions, enabled us to get the heavy and comparatively unprofitable work of continental fighting done for us. Our own little army was kept, as a rule, for the amphibious work of acquiring our Colonial Empire.

Not that the policy of the eighteenth century was in any way perfect. Far from it. The system of subventions was not so much a matter of choice, as, in a large measure, a matter of political necessity. The result of the long civil conflict of the seventeenth century had been to inspire the English nation with an intense jealousy and distrust of the Army. But for that we can well imagine that the assistance given to our continental allies might have taken the form, not of money, but of men. We should in that case have been in a far stronger position. To use the industrial metaphor, we should have kept the military industry within our own borders. The hired foreign armies were not available everywhere or always, and the military skill evoked by the great struggles on the Continent did not inure to our benefit. It was the neglect of our Army, the reckless cutting down after the Seven Years' War, that was the prime cause of the loss of the American Colonies. Had our Army been only a little larger or a little more efficient, it could have crushed the American revolt at the outset. We should then still have had an opportunity for correcting our political errors in our treatment of the Colonies, as Rome had an opportunity for

correcting her mistaken policy towards her Italian allies after she had crushed them in the social war. Again, even in Europe, the policy of hiring continental allies came to grief when revolutionary France suddenly brought into the field that new engine of war—the nation in arms. Our victory at Trafalgar was neutralised by *our* defeats at Jena and Austerlitz ; and ten years of war, adding an enormous and crushing burden of debt, had to pass before Trafalgar was consummated by Leipzig and Waterloo.

With Waterloo began a new phase in our national history. New external conditions and new internal developments necessarily altered the whole national attitude towards the problem of defence. We had emerged from a great war in complete command of the sea. No other nation seriously thought of disputing our naval supremacy. The security of our oversea trade, the possession of the oversea Empire we had won, and the power of expanding it indefinitely, followed as a matter of course. Our industry was full of strength and vitality. During all the troubles and uncertainties of the Napoleonic wars, England's security from invasion had caused a steady influx of accumulated capital. At the same time we had emerged exhausted. The necessity of finding means for carrying on the struggle had burdened our industries with innumerable taxes, in which the original object of stimulating industrial development and safeguarding national defence had been almost wholly lost sight of. A tremendous reaction set in against the militarism which had necessitated these burdens, and against the selfish political oligarchy into whose hands the defence of the country had fallen. New classes without political experience or political traditions came to power, displacing the old ruling classes. These new classes regarded the whole political attitude of their predecessors with suspicion—a suspicion of which traces still linger among us. Cobden's continual denunciation of the Colonial system

and of militarism was deeply imbued with social prejudice. He looked upon the Army, the Navy, and the Colonies as aristocratic preserves, mere instruments of social influence and social intrigue.¹ The connection between industry and defence, between trade and the Empire, was wholly lost from view. Each of these things seemed so secure by itself that their underlying historical and vital unity was forgotten. The whole higher unity of national life fell to pieces, and for two generations Englishmen were taught to regard that national life under a single aspect—the aspect of unregulated commerce, safeguarded by the policeman and the law-courts. For the first time in our history we really had become a nation of shopkeepers, with all the narrowness and short-sightedness the epithet is held to convey.

The result was very much what might have been expected. There was a very great increase in every direction. But not all of that increase was secure. To a great extent we lost the political control of our commerce; and that commerce existed—and still exists, to a large extent—only in so far as other States chose to let it exist. The industrial development naturally produced an enormous increase of population. But the greater part of that went outside our own political borders. The population of the United States was, to a large extent, stimulated by the overflow from this country, and was actually built up in America itself by the sustaining power of the British market. That population was lost immediately as far as defence was concerned, and was gradually lost for economic purposes as well, as it began to learn to manufacture for itself, and refused to keep its market open to British goods. It is no exaggeration to say that we lost a greater Colonial empire to the United States in the nineteenth century than we did in the eighteenth. Even as regards the population which remained

¹ Just so many Labour representatives to-day imagine they exist mainly for the benefit of 'capitalists.'

within the Empire, it was bound to the Mother Country by the weakest of political ties, and allowed to move away towards complete economic separation. Outside of England the economic development of the British Empire was very slow. Taken as a whole, there can be no doubt that the expansion of wealth and population in the British State was far less under the policy pursued than it would have been under a policy which looked to national greatness and security as a whole.

About twenty years ago we began to enter upon a new phase in our national life. The change was partly internal, and partly external. There was a gradual intellectual reaction against the Little Englander and the Cobdenite school of thought, which first asserted itself in the national attitude towards the political unity of the Empire, and towards naval and military defence. The opposition to Irish Home Rule may be said to have marked a turning-point. In the next ten years the idea of Imperial unity developed mightily. The Diamond Jubilee, the South African War, the Imperial Conference of 1902, and the present movement for commercial unity, marked the further stages in that development. The new ideal of Empire is, however, not the same as the old one. It is a loftier and nobler conception, corresponding to the wider outlook and broader humanity of advancing civilisation. In the first British Empire England was the only part which counted. The rest of the Empire had only been created for the sake of England's economic and defensive strength. The other parts of the Empire were but buttresses intended to prop up the parent stem. None was really considered essential. If one was lost, another could be created to fill its place. The sentiments and aspirations of the population which was growing up in the Colonies were not regarded. Of this disregard the American Revolution was but the natural fruit. In the next phase England again was still the only

object of political solicitude. But now the value of buttresses was no longer believed in. The Colonies were regarded as elements of weakness rather than of strength. It was supposed that if they could be encouraged to develop as independent States, England would be free from the responsibility of defending them, and yet enjoy all the advantages of trading with them. Fortunately, these short-sighted views never wholly prevailed. The Empire has remained, disunited indeed and undeveloped, but still substantially intact. The new ideal which has meanwhile grown up and gathered strength is that of the Empire as a single united whole, a great world-State, composed of equal and independent and yet indissolubly united States. Every unit of this great federation is as essential to the whole as any part of the United Kingdom. To the true Imperialist Canada and South Africa are in every sense as real and essential parts of his country, of the State which claims his patriotic allegiance, as Scotland, Wales, or Kent. Each State of the British Empire is as essential to the whole as are the States of the American Union. This may not yet perhaps be the attitude of every Englishman, or of every Canadian, or South African, but it is an attitude which is becoming more general, and one that is growing in strength. How rapidly it has grown is shown by the South African War. That war was in its essence a war of secession, an attempt on the part of semi-dependent States to wrest themselves, and not only themselves, but the whole of South Africa, out of the Imperial system. The Colonies sent their contingents to oppose that attempt, not so much from any affection for the United Kingdom, as from the determination that the British Empire should be preserved intact.

Closely connected with the internal change in the Empire have been the changes in its external surroundings, which have again made the question of defence vital, and through the aspect of defence have helped on the movement for unity.

Europe took much longer to recover from the great crisis of the Napoleonic wars than England. A constant series of conflicts between the different States, and between the different classes in those States, retarded their economic development. Gradually, however, a measure of internal and external equilibrium was arrived at, and was followed by a stage of rapid economic development. Prussia, pursuing a policy in its spirit closely akin to that of England in the eighteenth century, made defence—through education, through efficiency of administration, and through the fostering of industry—subserve the purposes of national development, and in the last generation has reaped the fruits of her policy in an expansion of national strength, with which our expansion in recent times can bear no comparison. Russia, too, is gradually becoming a modern State, and though internal misgovernment and disastrous wars abroad may retard, yet they cannot in the long run check her economic development, or the growth of her power. The United States after a long period, during which all their energies were turned inwards, are now looking without, and entering into the competition of the world not only as an industrial, but also as a military and naval power. With all these States industrial development has led to the desire to control markets and the sources of raw materials—in other words, to a policy of expansion. That same industrial development has provided them with the wealth which makes that expansion possible, which enables them to maintain great armies and build great fleets. We have gradually come back to the situation of two centuries ago ; only what is threatened now is not so much England as the British Empire as a whole, and England herself mainly in so far as she is dependent on the Empire and on her trade for holding her own. The new danger can only be met in the same spirit as the old. No army reorganisations or naval schemes, no mere increases of our defence budgets will

permanently solve it. We must go back to the old view, and remember that defence is an essential part of the national life, a thing which must be kept in mind in everything that we do or leave undone, a part to which every other must, in a sense, be subordinated for the development of the whole.

With this view before us, let us now consider what the defence of the British Empire involves. To do this we must first have regard to its extent and position, to the distribution, total volume, and economic strength of its population on the one hand, and on the other to the position of its principal rivals. The British Empire covers the largest area of any Empire in the world, and has the largest gross population. But that population is of very unequal political, economic, and defensive value. Only the white population in it can be reckoned fully efficient in any of these respects. The white population of the British Empire is only a little over fifty millions. If we set against that figure the sixty millions of the present German Empire, the eighty millions of the united Germany towards which Pan-Germanism is working, or the seventy millions of the white inhabitants of the United States, and also consider the extent and configuration of the territories to be defended, the weakness of the material basis on which that vast Empire is built at once becomes evident. Moreover, that efficient population is most unequally distributed. Four-fifths of it are concentrated in these islands. This, no doubt, is an advantage in so far as islands are difficult to invade or to conquer. Unfortunately, the islands in question are much too small even to support their existing population, and the need of securing free access to supplies from overseas is a serious strategical weakness. Besides, the comparative security of one part of the Empire is of little advantage if other parts, no less essential to the whole, are insecure. The Empire possesses two enormous land frontiers bordering on the territories of two of the greatest world-States. Behind

neither of these frontiers is there a sufficient development of economic and national strength to ensure the safety of our position.

The defence of an Empire whose parts are divided by the sea demands first and foremost a supreme Navy. That supremacy is more essential than ever now that the outlying parts of the Empire are regarded not as dependencies, but as integral portions whose maintenance is essential to the existence of the whole. On the other hand, the oversea possessions of the other Powers are only dependencies, in the sense that the British Colonies once were, and not integral portions of themselves, and for that very reason the loss of naval supremacy means more to us than to any of them. That supremacy must, therefore, be secure, not only against the most imminent risks, but against any risks that are even remotely probable. The maintenance of the two-Power standard is, perhaps, the very lowest measure that we can allow ourselves. Our Navy is our very existence. We can allow no State, or pair of States, however seemingly well-disposed, to outbuild us at sea.

At the same time, a supreme Navy alone will not suffice. In the first place, a purely naval war cannot crush a continental enemy. It may be prolonged indefinitely, and cost enormous sums, which will cripple the whole power of the nation, and thus in the long run endanger naval supremacy itself, for naval supremacy must be based on national wealth. Moreover, even to purely naval success, military success is sometimes an essential factor. Without the army which captured Port Arthur, the Japanese would have found it far more difficult, perhaps impossible, to establish their naval supremacy in the Far East. The battle of Mukden has probably prevented Russia from ever again becoming a dominating Power on the coasts of the Pacific, and has, therefore, greatly weakened her chances of becoming a dominant Power on the waters of that ocean. Again, the Navy, to make sure

of success, must be absolutely unhampered in the pursuit of its strategical objective—the enemy's fighting fleets. It must not be tied down to local defence. The object of our fleets is not to prevent an invasion of England, but to destroy hostile fleets. Lastly, a Navy cannot defend a continental State. But the British Empire is, as regards Canada and India, at least, a continental Empire. Nothing that we can do at sea could ever recover either Canada or India if they had once come under the grip of the great territorial Empires whose frontiers march with them. But the defence of Canada and India is as essential to the existence of the British Empire as the defence of England.

The defence of India is, indeed, the first and most pressing military problem to which we must attend. When we conquered India it was practically an island. Even now it is still separated by an enormous gap from the effective centre of Russian power. At the same time, Russia—the real Russia, not the boundary on the map—is steadily advancing towards the Indian frontier. That advance will only be delayed, but not stopped, by defeat in the Far East, or a revolution at home. The completion of strategical railways towards Afghanistan has been going on steadily, in spite of the war in Manchuria. Russia believes, and correctly believes, that she can concentrate even larger armies in Afghanistan than in Manchuria, and she also believes—and again, unfortunately, with reason—that we cannot bring against her as large or as well-trained forces as Japan has done. Whatever may be the situation at the present moment, the general trend of events is certain. Europe, with its economic and industrial development, its railways, and its military power, is slowly advancing across Asia, and will bring the whole weight of the European state, organised on modern military lines, against an Asiatic Empire, based on primitive agriculture, and defended by a small and expensive standing Army, partly native and

partly European, with no adequate reserve behind it. This state of affairs is supremely unsatisfactory, and must be altered while Russia's present exhaustion gives us the time to do so. In the first place, we must create in this country a really adequate reserve for a great war in Asia. That reserve is not to be found in our existing military system, nor will Mr. Arnold-Forster's scheme, however great its merits in some respects, provide it. The defence of India will require something much more powerful than Mr. Arnold-Foster's short-service reserve army. We require something in the nature of an Imperial militia, an organisation that will enable us to put a really large and effective force, reckoned not in tens, but in hundreds of thousands, into the field in front of India, and to maintain and increase that force during a long war. How that force is to be raised and trained, and how it is to be paid for, is a problem that presents the very gravest difficulties. At the same time, it is a problem which must be faced. But even if we have a great reserve in this country, its distance from the Indian frontier constitutes a serious danger, especially in the case of a war fought on sea as well as on land. The creation of a reserve nearer to the Indian frontier than these islands is very desirable. Sooner or later it will be essential to organise something in the nature of an effective Imperial militia in the Colonies, of which both South Africa and the Australasian Colonies are much nearer to India than this country. But such a militia can only be raised in sufficient numbers and maintained effective if the population of those parts of the Empire is increased very largely beyond what it is at present, and also if it has an equal share with ourselves in the governing of India. In the meantime, we can do something by keeping as large a proportion as possible of our regular Army in those Colonies, though that can only be regarded as a temporary measure. Lastly, India herself must also be enabled to play her part more adequately in her own

defence. The economic development of India, the building up of a great industrial community on the basis of the present purely agricultural India, is an essential element in Imperial Defence, and no considerations of the selfish interest of the English export trade can be allowed to stand in the way of that development. Ultimately, too, the political evolution of India will be necessary in order to enable her fully to carry out her part in defending her own frontiers. Nothing would be more unwise than to attempt suddenly to introduce the English political system into India—to adopt the panaceas of the Indian National Congress. At the same time, things cannot remain for ever as they are now, if for no other reason, simply because a State governed and administered on the lines of the India of to-day cannot hold its own in war against States in a higher condition of political development.

The problem of Canada may seem less pressing from the immediate military point of view, but it is even more vital than that of the defence of India. The defence of Canada is a question of principle and of national self-respect, rather than of immediate danger. It is the very touchstone of Imperialism. Unless we are prepared to defend Canada to the utmost, to put our last man into the field, and spend our last shilling, all our professions of belief in a united Empire are mere verbiage. That our existing military system, or Mr. Arnold-Forster's modification of it, meets the demands of the Canadian problem even less than it does those of the Indian problem, is obvious: for Canada, even more than for India, a large Imperial reserve is a necessity. But even more essential than the creation of a reserve in this country for the defence of Canada is the creation of such a force in Canada itself. To build up a population in Canada is the only effective means of securing the defence of that portion of the Empire. As long as we have only five or six millions on our side of those four

thousand miles of frontier, and the United States have seventy millions on the other, so long our Empire exists only on sufferance, and so long our relations with the United States can never be thoroughly friendly or thoroughly satisfactory. To build up the population of Canada to at least twenty or thirty millions is the most pressing need of Imperial Defence: to that every other consideration ought to give way.

The defence of the United Kingdom is a matter which requires but little consideration. Its solution is included in the solution of the greater and more vital problems already dealt with. With a supreme Navy capable of maintaining the connection between the different parts of the Empire, with a military system which provides a reserve force sufficient to cope with the demands of the Indian or Canadian portion, the security of the heart of the Empire will be almost impregnable. The very essence of any military system such as our Imperial necessities demand must be absolute elasticity, a capacity for almost unlimited expansion. With such a system there will always be a surplus available for local defence, even if we lost five hundred thousand men in India and the whole of the Navy in the Mediterranean.

The conclusion we have arrived at, then, is that the defence of the British Empire demands, first and foremost, a supreme Navy, and secondly, an efficient Army, capable of indefinite expansion, and available at the exposed frontiers of the Empire. How are these to be maintained? Whence are we to raise the revenue, and where to find the population to maintain them? It is perfectly clear that in the long run the United Kingdom, which maintains the whole burden of our present very inadequate defence, will be unable to meet these larger demands. As an industrial unit, the United Kingdom has long ago been outstripped by the United States. It is at this moment being outstripped by

Germany, and may even, in a future not so very remote, be outstripped by Russia and Japan. With the economic development of our industrial rivals their aggressive powers will steadily grow, and their ambition will grow to match them. The burden of maintaining the two-Power standard at sea, as against France and Russia, and keeping up an Army sufficient for the policing of the Empire, has already proved heavy enough. At the present moment we pay something like seventy millions a year for Imperial Defence. We have, indeed, for the moment, been able to make a considerable reduction in our naval expenditure, partly as the result of internal reorganisation in the Navy, which is all to the good, partly owing to the temporary disablement of Russia. This latter reduction may or may not be sound policy, but, at any rate, is not a permanent saving. The question is, What are we to do when the United States and Germany seriously begin to compete with us for naval supremacy, and when at the same time Russia, recovered from her present misfortunes, begins to press close on our Indian frontier? The naval ambitions of the German Emperor are too well known to need more than a passing reference here. But it is equally clear that of late years President Roosevelt has deeply stirred the American nation with the same idea of oversea Empire and naval power. The United States are our friends—and long may they continue to remain so—but they have not always been so in the past, and there is no guarantee that they will remain our friends for ever. So vital is naval supremacy to us that we cannot tolerate any nation, or pair of nations, however friendly at the moment, being stronger than ourselves at sea. Once we allow that to happen, the whole framework on which our Empire is built will fall to pieces. Admitting that, then we are bound to keep up the competition. Whatever naval programme they fix upon, we have got to surpass. If their naval budgets rise to fifty millions, we shall have

to follow suit ; and if they raise them again to sixty, seventy, or eighty millions, we still can do nothing else but follow. But in a competition of this sort with States growing so enormously in industrial strength, and established on so broad a basis of territory and population, we cannot hope in the long run to succeed. The burden will press more and more heavily on our narrower shoulders, and sooner or later we shall come to grief. Whether our downfall will take the shape of financial exhaustion, or of displacement from our position ; whether it will be by war, or by the menace of superior force in peace, is immaterial.

There is only one way out of the difficulty—that is, to find the material basis of our defence policy, not in the United Kingdom, but in the British Empire. At present that Empire is unorganised and undeveloped ; but if we can unite its scattered components, and develop its vast territories and immense natural resources, then we may hope to build up an industrial power, and to create a population fully capable of providing for the needs of Imperial policy without fainting beneath the burden. How are we, then, to secure that union and foster that development ? Immediate political union presents many difficulties. There is at present no sufficient unity of interest on which a political constitution can be based. Neither we nor the Colonies are ready for it, and it can only come gradually along with, and as the result of, other forms of the union. The same difficulties stand in the way of any common military system. That, again, can only be organised by slow degrees, and in proportion as community of interest and community of danger develop. The form in which at present assistance from the Colonies is most frequently demanded—that of money contribution to Imperial Defence—is the one from which least is to be expected. It is, moreover, the one which is in itself the least desirable. The Colonies do make certain money contributions at the

present moment towards the upkeep of the Imperial Navy, but those contributions are valuable mainly as signs of their goodwill. Their total amount is insignificant compared with the total of our expenditure. Yet there is very little hope of getting that amount increased. The fact is, and we must not lose sight of it, that the Colonies are really poor countries. They are rich in land, rich in boundless possibilities for the future, but they are comparatively poor in ready money. Every penny they can raise is required for their internal administration and for their development. It is impossible for them to make any large contributions in money without seriously crippling their own growth, and consequently delaying the general development of the Empire. The economic development of the Colonies, the building up of their populations and industries, and the creation of surplus wealth, are indispensable conditions precedent to any substantial financial assistance from them towards the burden of Imperial Defence.

Furthermore, before we can arrive at any common system of defence, we must Imperialise our policy, the attitude of our Government departments, and the personnel of our services. Our foreign policy is still to a very large extent English rather than Imperial. The trade interests of England bulk in it much more largely than those of other parts of the Empire. The defence of those interests continually brings the Imperial Power into strained relations with other Powers. Those strained relations may involve the whole Empire in wars in which great parts of the Empire have had no interest. No doubt the Imperial forces would defend India and the Colonies from harm during such a war; but it would be open to India and to the Colonies to retort that, as far as they were concerned, such a war would never have come about. That English interests should be defended by the whole Empire is only right and natural. But if it is desired that the whole forces of the

Empire should be organised for the defence of English interests, it is essential that those interests should be as far as possible assimilated with those of other parts of the Empire. Economic unity must be regarded as an essential step towards unity of defence. When our economic system has so developed that it will be impossible, in most cases, for an outside Power to interfere with English interests without at the same time interfering with Colonial or Indian interests, then we may hope to enlist the serious and permanent attention of the Colonies in the problems of Imperial Defence. What applies to the general policy of the Foreign Office applies no less to the details of its departmental work. The Imperialising of our Consular Service is perhaps the first and most pressing necessity, unless we wish, before many years are out, to be faced, in the case of Canada, with the same unpleasant demand for a separate consular system that is now dividing Sweden and Norway. Our Navy, our Army, our Colonial and Indian administration must also be thrown open to the whole Empire. Without that we cannot secure that personal interest, that sense of full and equal participation, which is necessary to bring every part of the Empire into line, ready and anxious to do its share in the common work.

At the same time, we must develop as well as unite. However closely the existing Empire were united, it would yet not be equal to the burden of its own defence. What was said of Canada and India a little earlier in the present article is equally applicable to the Empire as a whole. The economic development of the Empire, the increasing of its efficient population, and the raising of the efficiency of its less efficient population, are the really wider problems of Imperial Defence. It is only by enlarging the material basis that the burden of defence can really be made lighter, and prevented from weighing unduly on the other elements of the national life, and hampering their full development.

But political unity and economic development are not in themselves sufficient to meet the needs of Imperial Defence. They form the material basis. But they will not by themselves insure that that material basis is efficiently utilised. What is essential is not merely a recognition on the part of statesmen of the relation between defence and the other factors of the national life, but the realisation by the whole body of the citizens of the Empire of the importance of defence, and of the duty of taking a personal interest and a personal share in it. Without that personal interest, defence in a self-governing community is bound to be inefficient. The present efficiency of our Navy is a direct result of the revival of interest in naval matters, and of the recognition of the essential importance of sea power, which was stimulated by the writings of Captain Mahan, Mr. Spenser Wilkinson, and many others, and which, indeed, has never entirely died out in this country. Our Army system, on the other hand, is inherently inefficient, because it has never really formed a part of the national life, because the ordinary citizen, or the ordinary politician, has no idea of the purpose for which he wants an army, or of what constitutes military efficiency. It is from that lack of national interest and national understanding that all the defects of our military system flow. An indifferent nation means an indifferent Parliament, and an indifferent Parliament means an indifferent Cabinet, and an indifferent Prime Minister. Under such circumstances the Secretary of State for War is usually a nonentity, or, if not, he wears himself out by his vain efforts to force through his schemes against the passive obstruction of his colleagues and the indifference of the nation. Behind the Secretary of State there stands the War Office disorganised and emasculated by the hopelessness of ever getting anything done, or ever finding out what it is wanted to do, and from the War Office hopelessness and indifference spread throughout the Army.

The South African War brought out the defects of our military system in the most striking fashion. Not only the nation and the Government, but the Army itself, apart from its inadequacy in numbers, was completely unprepared for war. There was hardly a single officer or soldier who was really trained for war, who knew what war meant, who realised the intellectual and physical preparation required for it, or the energy and the sacrifices demanded in waging it. Our military failure in South Africa was not merely that of antiquated tactical methods, and insufficient book-work or defective maps, though all these features played a part in it ; it was also a failure in the military spirit. The attitude of the Army was as unwarlike in its essence as the attitude of the nation. The absurd fear of casualties, the hysterical excitement about the Boer artillery, the exaggeration of the depth of rivers and steepness of mountains, which were so conspicuous features in the reports of press correspondents, were but the reflection of the attitude of the officers from whom those correspondents derived their impressions, and who censored their despatches.

To secure an efficient defence we must have a nation interested in defence. The study of military problems ought to form an essential part of the citizen's education in his political duties. Military history ought to be included in the curriculum of our public schools and Universities. It is a national disgrace that there is no Chair of Military History or of Strategy at either Oxford or Cambridge.¹ In a country like Germany, where the leading of the Army is entrusted to a military class largely separate from the body of the nation, it may do to have military history confined to a section of the General Staff. In a democratic nation like ours that study must be spread through all the more intelligent sections of the community. At the same time,

¹ This defect has now been remedied in part, though military science is still a long way from playing the part it should in a liberal education.

it is no less essential that the Army itself should be educated in the broader meaning of Imperial Defence, and in the fuller understanding of its own profession. The educational apparatus of our Army is ridiculously inadequate. The enlargement and improvement of our military colleges, the creation of an adequate historical section, are the first and most essential steps towards Army reform. At the same time, we have to provide not only for the politicians and for the leaders of armies, but also for the ordinary voter and for the common soldier. Some form of military education which will make the ordinary man realise something of the general meaning of Imperial Defence, and acquire something of the spirit which is essential to the effective conduct of war, must be brought to bear upon the whole body of citizens. Some form of national service is essential to national military efficiency, quite apart from the length of the training given, and from the direct usefulness of the Army thus created. Given a nation in which every citizen possesses a certain proficiency in the use of arms, and is accustomed to the idea that it is his duty, if need be, to sacrifice even his life for the public good, and it will be possible to raise an economical and efficient voluntary army in peace, and to furnish a boundless reserve in time of war. On that reserve a nation interested in its military security, and aware of the means necessary to secure it, will be able to draw to whatever extent is necessary. How the Empire can be defended without that reserve against nations that possess it is a question that we are bound to ask ourselves, and to which there can only be one answer.

It may be objected that the national ideal sketched out in the preceding pages is the mere perversion of an imagination fevered by militarism. It will be said that, in order to make the Empire secure, I am proposing changes which will destroy its whole character, and the justification of its existence—its personal liberty, its material well-being. This I would entirely and absolutely deny. In the earlier

portion of the present article I pointed out that defence, when treated as an essential element in national policy—not as a mere isolated department calling for money, and withdrawing strength from the nation—in the long run only stimulates and increases the other factors of national life. A really serious and unflinching consideration of the great problem of defence will inevitably lead to measures that, in the end, are bound to benefit our population, our trade, our social well-being, our education. The Imperial Unity necessary for defence will quicken our whole political and social life. The fostering of trade within the Empire, and the building up of population in the Colonies, will in the end mean not a mere diversion of the total wealth and population of the Empire, but an enormous aggregate increase. National service will not only provide the reserve for our armies, and increase the efficiency of the voluntary armies raised in the midst of a warlike nation, but it will benefit us in innumerable other ways. It will infuse a spirit of discipline and organisation into our masses; it will at the same time be democratic, bringing every class together to the same common work, and inspiring them with a common sense of duty. It will afford an opportunity for raising the standard and prolonging the period of the national education. It will give a healthy physical training to the mass of our people at the time of life when such training is most needed, and thus conduce to healthier and longer life, and increase our sum-total of man-power. It will enable anything like physical degeneration to be at once noted, and will call for its instant cure. In fact, if only we take the defence aspect of our Empire seriously, we shall solve all the other problems connected with it, because they will one by one force themselves upon our serious attention, and we shall have to give the best of our mind and the whole of our determination to solving them.

V

THE MILITARY GEOGRAPHY OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE¹

I THINK I had better begin by explaining what the subject of my address is going to be, and what meaning I attach to the title which I have chosen. By the 'Military Geography of the British Empire' I wish to convey to you two leading ideas. The first of these is that we should envisage the problem of Imperial Defence as a single whole, and from the point of view, not of the United Kingdom, which is only a portion of the Empire, but from that of the whole Empire regarded as a single indivisible world-state. The second is that we should consider the problem of Imperial Defence to-night, not by the light of the political or military controversies of the moment, but in relation to the broader and more permanent factors which underlie it. These factors I would sum up by the words, military geography, a term which I venture to think legitimately includes, not only the physical configuration and distribution of the territories of the Empire, but also some consideration of the various populations inhabiting those territories, and of their political and economic condition in so far as they bear upon the question of Imperial Defence. Further, as Imperial Defence implies war, and war implies more than one combatant, the military geography of the British Empire must also necessarily take into account the military position and resources of such other Powers as we may conceivably come into conflict with.

¹ An address delivered to the Royal Scottish Geographical Society on March 13, 1908.

The usual order in books of geography is to begin with the physical features of a state and then to proceed to deal with its inhabitants. But in treating of military affairs the inverse sequence is the more logical. For it is peoples and not places that wage war. What we want to know first is, who are the combatants, and only afterwards where they are fighting. Our first step then will be to take a brief survey of the respective populations of our Empire and of its principal competitors. After that we can go on to inquire how far the conclusions as to the relative military strength of these populations indicated by our survey may have to be modified by considerations of a more strictly geographical character.

The population of the British Empire is, roughly, some four hundred millions. With the single and somewhat doubtful exception of China, that is by far the largest population of any state in the world. Of other states the Russian Empire alone has more than one-third of our population, while that of the United States barely exceeds one-fifth of ours. But from the military point of view—which thus differs from the current political point of view—it is essential to remember that it is not enough merely to count numbers, we must also weigh them, and endeavour to estimate their military value. The factors that constitute military efficiency are on the whole the same as those which constitute civilisation generally, but with certain differences. Broadly speaking, only a community at a high level of general civilisation can afford the surplus revenue required for waging war effectively on a large scale, especially if that war has to be conducted at sea or at any distance from its main military bases on land. At the same time civilisation undoubtedly tends in some directions to diminish the military efficiency of the individual. Natural fighting instincts are weakened by too great a sense of security. The townsman is not as good material for a soldier as the

peasant or backwoodsman, and a purely urban community may be as seriously hampered by the inferiority of its fighting material, as a purely agricultural community may be hampered by want of the funds necessary to procure the costly equipment of modern war. Moreover, racial, as well as economic differences have to be considered. The London cockney may be inferior as a soldier to the Highland peasant, but he remains infinitely superior to the Bengali who, though a peasant, lacks all the military instincts which the other has inherited. The military man-power of a community is the product of all three factors: numbers, economic development, and individual fighting quality. That man-power again, we must remember, can only be effective if it is properly organised for war. By that I mean not only the provision of armaments and the training of soldiers or sailors, but the political and social organisation which gives strength to a government in times of crisis, and which can inspire the citizens with a willingness to make every sacrifice necessary for the safety or existence of the state.

Let us now apply these considerations to the four hundred millions who compose the population of the British Empire. The first and most striking fact is that nearly three hundred millions out of the four hundred are inhabitants of India. Now India is essentially a poor country. An overwhelming majority of its population consists of agriculturists living on the very verge of subsistence, and often suffering from actual famine. The taxable wealth which can be devoted to military purposes is very small, and India sustains with difficulty a defence budget amounting to less than one-third of the defence budget of the United Kingdom. Again, only a very small proportion of the various races which make up the population of India have any natural military aptitude. The Indian authorities even now find no little difficulty in keeping their Sikh and Gurkha regiments up to strength. There is no vast reserve of potential soldiers

to draw upon, and in case of a great frontier war, though the native army may be considerably increased, the bulk of reinforcements would still have to come from elsewhere. Lastly, the population of India is a subject population. There are many elements of discontent with our rule, which undoubtedly could not be maintained for a single year without the help of the British garrison, and though there is also a widespread genuine loyalty to the British Raj, we cannot look for any of that ardent patriotism which makes a free people so formidable in the hour of danger, that spirit of self-sacrifice which gave the Japanese so great an advantage over their Russian enemies in the late war. For all these reasons it is necessary to make very heavy discount in estimating the military value of the vast population of the Indian Empire. As a purely military asset I doubt if we could reckon its value to the British Empire higher than that of a population of ten or at the most fifteen millions of our own race, and on the same political and economic level as ourselves.

What applies to the population of India applies equally to the five or six millions of other Asiatic subjects of the British Crown, and to the ten million Egyptians, whom for our purpose we can count as being within the Empire. On a far lower scale politically and economically, though possibly more effective as fighting men, are the forty million blacks in our African and West Indian possessions. There remain as the real residue of our military strength, the real bearers of the burden of Empire, only some fifty-six million white men, highly civilised, wealthy, and at the same time individually of good fighting quality. Even from these, however, we ought to make some deductions. Over three million Irishmen, though they contribute to our national strength in taxes and in recruits, are yet politically hostile to the Empire. That is a feature of the situation which we may deplore and hope eventually to

change, but which for the present we must accept. Again, the loyalty of some two and a half millions of French-Canadians and over half a million South-African Dutchmen naturally tends to be of a negative rather than of a positive character, and they can hardly, at present, be counted as an asset for Imperial Defence in precisely the same sense as the colonists of British race. A further source of weakness is the fact that the fifty-six million whites are not really united politically. Practically the whole financial burden of Empire rests upon the forty-four million inhabitants of these islands. The twelve millions in the junior states of the Empire contribute a very inadequate share, even if we take their local forces into account. On the other hand, the whole power and privilege of Empire is vested in the hands of the people of these islands. Our Colonial fellow-citizens have no voice whatever in settling the destiny of the Empire, and receive few of the advantages and emoluments which go with the administration of Imperial affairs.

How do these figures and conditions compare with those of other countries? Let us take, first, our oldest rival and enemy, now our good friend, France. The general civilisation and individual fighting value of the French population is much the same as our own, the chief difference being that France is still to a much larger extent an agricultural country. But the total population of France is under forty millions, to which the thirty-seven millions of coloured subjects in the French colonies and protectorates furnish no serious addition of military strength. As far as these elementary factors of national strength go, France is no longer able to hold her own with us, though she is still powerful enough to make an invaluable ally or a formidable element in a hostile combination. The same holds good of Japan, whose forty-eight million patriotic, frugal, and enterprising citizens do not as yet represent a total of military man-power comparable with that of the British Empire.

The situation is somewhat different when we come to Russia, whose hundred and forty millions, though still economically and politically on a much lower level than the nations of Western Europe, are nevertheless going through a process of rapid development which may soon render Russia infinitely more formidable than she was before the Manchurian campaign. The comparison wears an entirely different aspect, however, when we come to consider the case of Germany. The population of Germany is now some sixty-two millions. That is to say, it is larger than the total white population of the British Empire. Both as an industrial producer and as a fighting man the German is to-day fully on a level with the Briton, and the German Empire enjoys the further advantage of effective political unity which we are still far from attaining. It is difficult to resist the conclusion that the effective manpower of Germany is at least equal to our own. The effective white population of the United States, even after deducting negroes and unassimilated aliens, is fully seventy millions, and, although the Americans are very far from being organised for war as thoroughly as the Germans, their greater individual wealth and productiveness make them potentially even more formidable as a military power. In the case both of Germany and of the United States we are already at a disadvantage, and the disadvantage is an increasing one, for their populations are growing at a much faster rate than the white population of our Empire. There is one other Power that I should like to mention, which cannot, indeed, come seriously into consideration at present, owing to its low level of political organisation and economic development, but which may, in the course of the next generation or two, develop a quite undreamed of political and military power. I mean the Chinese Empire.

On a mere comparison of effective numbers our position is, as I have shown, very far from being as favourable as it

might appear at first sight. The question is, how far is that comparison affected or modified by geographical considerations? By that I mean not only how far do the frontiers of the Empire lend themselves to defence, in virtue either of their physical features or of the facility with which our forces can be concentrated upon them, but also how far does the geographical distribution of our territories and economic interests tend to give rise to conflicts of interest with other Powers. Let us suppose, for instance, that all the territories of the British Empire formed a single island or group of islands set apart in the midst of the ocean, and that the economic activities of the Empire were entirely confined within its own borders. In that case there could be no cause for international complications, unless, indeed, the Empire were so weak as deliberately to invite spoliation. Such immunity from serious conflict of interests with any powerful foreign state was enjoyed by the United States for over eighty years after their last war with Great Britain. Since 1898 the career of the United States has been one of territorial as well as economic expansion oversea, and to-day they are beginning to find themselves face to face with a similar expansion on the part of other Powers, such as, for instance, Japan. They have stepped into the arena of international conflict, and will, sooner or later, have to face the consequences. The same immunity, to a large extent, was enjoyed by the British Dominions overseas during the greater part of the last century. Trafalgar left Great Britain as supreme at sea as four centuries of British statesmanship left her supreme in industry and commerce. Outside of Europe and the southern half of America, where the Monroe doctrine imposed a barrier which British policy had itself helped to erect, and which it had no wish to break down, the whole world lay open to British conquest or colonisation. The British Government had no desire for either, but in spite of all its efforts the exigencies of local

administration and the enterprise of individual pioneers and traders gradually consolidated the great Indian Empire, and built up the British Colonies in Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa. Except relatively feeble Oriental potentates or savage tribes there was no adversary to be considered. Consequently, no strategical or political conceptions dominated the choice of our acquisitions of territory. Far removed from the noise of the conflict of armed nations, without thought of the morrow, the British Empire grew up in a haphazard and sporadic fashion over the face of the earth.

Meanwhile a great change was taking place in Europe. By 1870 the long struggle for German and Italian unity had been achieved and an internal equilibrium established in Europe which has now lasted for over a generation. A great expansion of European industry followed, and with it a desire for territorial expansion and naval power. But in its efforts to extend its territories or acquire a colonial empire, every power found itself confronted with the British Government either in actual political possession, or jealously watchful of the vested interests of a commerce spread all over the world, and acutely alive to the menace implied in the steady closing of every market controlled by protectionist rivals. The chief political feature of the twenty years between 1884 and 1904 was the almost continuous Anglo-European crisis which at frequent intervals threatened to come to a head in the shape of a war between Great Britain and an alliance of two or more European Powers. That it never actually came to a head is due to one fact, and to one fact alone. That fact was the maintenance of a two-power, and more than two-power, standard of naval strength by successive British Governments, of both political parties, throughout this critical period. By steadfast adherence to that policy Great Britain has so far triumphantly surmounted the dangers which encompassed

us. The Fashoda incident compelled France to realise that our naval supremacy could not be challenged, and thus paved the way for the general agreement of 1904 and the friendship which has followed. That same naval supremacy secured us the alliance of Japan, enabled us to prevent the Russo-Japanese conflict developing into a world-wide conflagration, and in the sequel has led to better relations with Russia herself. I doubt if ever in the course of the last fifty years our diplomatic position has been so favourable as it is to-day. And with all due allowance for the virtues of the Foreign Office, I think that, in the main, the credit for that satisfactory result should go to the Admiralty and to the taxpayer.

For the moment the international horizon is fair. But the permanent fact remains that the scattered territories which compose the Empire are no longer far removed from the scene of active international rivalry. On the contrary, they are now in the very midst of it. At every point they are in contact with the expanding activities and ambitions of other nations. Their distribution enormously increases the opportunities for friction, and adds to the number of our potential enemies. With the one exception of Austria, there is not a single great Power with which our frontiers do not march, or with which our economic interests may not at any moment seriously clash. So far then from being a protection, as it once was, the geographical distribution of the Empire is now a source of danger, a danger which will steadily increase with the development of other nations. It multiplies enormously not only the occasions which give rise to wars, but also the probability of those wars being waged against us not by single Powers but by armed coalitions. The prospect of being at war with more than one great Power at a time is destined to be permanent, and all our naval and military preparations will have to be determined by it.

The conclusion which I have drawn from the geographical distribution of the Empire, regarded as a source of possible conflicts, is only confirmed by a consideration of the actual naval and military problems which that distribution compels us to solve. Let us first deal with the naval problem. But before doing so we must get rid of a notion which is still very prevalent, even among naval men, that the primary object of the Navy is to secure the defence of these islands. The primary object of the Navy is to hold the Empire together. Its first duty is to keep open the internal communication between the different portions of the Empire. I say internal communications, because, if we look at the Empire as a single whole, the Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian Oceans are merely its internal waterways, in the same sense as St. George's Channel is an internal waterway of the United Kingdom. The defence of these islands or of the other seacoasts of the Empire, however important, is secondary to this object. For these islands might conceivably be defended on land even if our fleet were inferior to that of our enemies, whereas nothing but naval supremacy can keep the Empire together. The conception of the Empire as an indissoluble unit therefore makes the command of the sea more than ever a question of life and death for us. So essential is the command of the sea to us that it must be secure not only against the most imminent risks, but against any risks that are even remotely probable. To be stronger at sea than any other two Powers whatever is the very lowest measure of security we can allow ourselves. For our Navy is our very existence.

There are certain geographical reasons, indeed, which make it doubtful whether we can always afford to be content even with a two-power standard. That standard came into recognition when the Atlantic, with its branches, the North Sea, Baltic, and Mediterranean, was regarded as the only permanent seat of naval power. But with the

growth of the Japanese and American Navies, of which the former is purely native to the Pacific, while the other will soon, by the construction of the Panama Canal, be concentrated with equal facility in either ocean, it may become necessary for us with our vast interests in the Pacific to be represented there by an adequate naval force additional to our two-power strength in Atlantic waters, and not to rely upon the goodwill of any foreign Power. I know, of course, that the naval theorist of a certain sect will say that the sea is all one, and that if we are supreme in the Atlantic we will eventually be supreme in the Pacific also whenever it pleases us. But I am afraid there are serious practical limitations to this theory. The Russians did not find the sea all one in their war with Japan. If it had been, their immensely superior fleet would not have been beaten in detachments as it was. The theorist will, of course, retort that the Russians should have kept all their fleet concentrated either in European waters or in the Pacific before the war began. But was that practical politics? A great Power, with important and pressing interests at stake in two hemispheres, cannot leave those interests undefended in one for fear of one particular danger out of a number of uncertain eventualities. And the same is true of ourselves. The theorists who talk cheerfully of leaving Australia undefended in order to secure a more effective concentration elsewhere, would make very wry faces if Australians suggested as an alternative the advisability of concentrating the whole Navy in the Pacific on the ground that a temporary German supremacy in the North Sea, and a possible invasion of the United Kingdom, were matters of indifference compared with the abstract principle of naval concentration. On the other hand, a mere scattering of the Navy without an increase of numerical strength might simply involve the risk of sharing the fate of Russia and being defeated by instalments. The fact is

that we have got to pay for being a world-wide Empire with shores on every ocean.

In this connection I would add that the shifting of one of the chief foci of international competition to the Pacific will eventually require not only that a considerable fleet should be stationed in those waters, but also that it should be permanently based there. An exotic Navy is, as the fate of Russia has shown, at a disadvantage compared with one which operates within range of its own arsenals and permanent bases. To be really secure in the Pacific we shall want to be able not only to shelter, coal and repair our ships in Australian and Canadian waters, but also to build and man them locally. And to do that we require to build up a large industrial and maritime population in those Colonies. The conception of a Navy based on all the territories and populations of the Empire is, indeed, a necessary complement of the view that the Empire is a single whole.

The argument I have used will not be invalidated by the completion of the Panama Canal, which will, indeed, to some extent, reduce the distance between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, but which may not always be available. We may note, however, in passing that the canal will tend to restore to the West Indies some of their old political and maritime importance.

But to return to our main conclusion as to the naval position. The character of the Empire as an oceanic power makes the maintenance of the two-power standard the very lowest measure of safety we can adopt. And further, the distribution of the Empire over ocean areas so far apart as the Atlantic and the Pacific may compel us to revise even that standard with the growth of new naval powers in Pacific waters. But even accepting the two-power standard as our limit, how is it going to be maintained? Sea power under modern conditions is based on money

power, on industrial and economical strength. A two-power standard in ships must have a two-power standard in available wealth and industrial power behind it. That condition we were able to fulfil in the naval competition with France and Russia which marked the close of the last century. For every pound the allies put down we put down our guinea, for every ship they launched we launched a bigger and a better one. Our industrial and commercial superiority—our greater effective man-power, to repeat the expression I used earlier in the evening—enabled us to do that.

But is the situation likely to be as favourable to us in the future? Have we got the same advantage over the Powers that are now coming to the front and clearly showing their ambition to contest the issue of maritime supremacy with us? The Powers I refer to are, of course, Germany and the United States. Each of these, as I have shown earlier, is at least our equal, if not our superior, in national strength, and the trend of development is certainly not to our advantage. Take the instance of a single industry, the iron and steel industry, which is the backbone of modern naval armaments. Thirty years ago our iron production was three times as great as that either of Germany or of the United States. We produced six and a half million tons to just over two millions on the part of each of them. In 1906 we produced just over ten million tons, Germany nearly twelve and a half million tons, and America over twenty-five millions. In the same year we produced nearly six and a half million tons of steel, Germany eleven millions, and the United States twenty-three millions. These figures indicate an alarming inferiority, and one which is continually becoming more marked. So far from our being in a position to maintain the two-power standard, I am not sure that we can maintain a one-power standard if either Germany or the United States mean business. What

Germany means is clear enough. She is laying down to-day whole squadrons of ships—the first of them was launched within the last few days—each one of which costs more than the whole German naval estimates of a generation ago. Two years hence her naval budget will reach the total of £23,000,000. Considering the growth of Germany's wealth, and the fact that the incidence of taxation in Germany is barely half as much per head as it is in this country, I see nothing whatever to prevent the German naval estimates rising to £30,000,000, or even £40,000,000, in a not too remote future. Moreover Germany enjoys an enormous advantage over us in the fact that she has no other naval commitments. She can always concentrate her whole navy at one point, and, her shores being protected by shoals and by a mighty army behind, can always spend it unreservedly on the attack. If she fails, nothing much is lost beyond the ships sunk and a few colonies of no great value. If we fail we lose everything.

There are many, I know, who while admitting the reality of the danger from Germany will refuse absolutely to face the even greater danger that may eventually arise from the expansion of the United States. I know what the average politician, who hates all unpleasant facts, will say: 'The Americans are our cousins and friends; war with them is unthinkable.' Unthinkable! There is no such word in international politics. We have been at war with the United States in the past. We have more than once since then been on the verge of war with them—the last time, only twelve years ago, over Venezuela. In any case, no statesman has the right, whatever the circumstances, to stake the existence of his country on the hope that the friendship of a foreign country will continue indefinitely. After all, on what is the present good relationship based? Mainly on the fact that in 1898 Americans realised that, but for the all-powerful British Navy, Europe would have

intervened against them on behalf of Spain. As the American Navy grows the need for our friendship will become less, and may possibly be replaced by a desire to challenge our position. The Americans spend £20,000,000 a year on their navy already. They could spend £50,000,000 without feeling it ; I am not afraid to say that they probably will be spending it before twenty years have passed.

So essential is naval supremacy to our very existence that we cannot afford to let any nation, or pair of nations, however friendly at the moment, outbuild us at sea. Once we allow that to happen, the whole framework on which the Empire is built will fall to pieces. The irresistible conclusion is that we shall have to face the prospect of naval estimates of £40,000,000 in the immediate future ; of £60,000,000, £80,000,000, or even £100,000,000 within the next generation. That is the naval problem that confronts us. How it is to be solved, if it can be solved at all, is a matter we will discuss later. For the moment it is enough to have stated it in its full seriousness.

Serious as it is, the naval issue by no means exhausts the problem of Imperial Defence. Whatever the British Islands may be, the Empire is a continental as well as an oceanic Power. I wonder how many of you have realised that the land frontier of the British Empire is not only longer than that of any other State, but nearly four times as long as that of Russia, the country which stands next in that respect. Our frontier runs, roughly speaking, for some 28,000 miles, as compared with the 7000 miles of the frontiers of Russia. Not all of that frontier, happily, is menaced by formidable neighbours. British South Africa, for instance, has a land frontier of considerably over 5000 miles—a longer frontier than Canada. But two of the Powers adjoining it, Portugal and the Congo Free State, need not be taken into serious consideration from the military point of view. Germany, on the other hand,

however dangerous her development may be to our naval supremacy and to the very existence of the Empire, is not strong enough locally either in her South-West African or her East African territory to constitute a real menace to South Africa. Some of our frontiers, again, are admirably protected by Nature. The northern frontier of India is covered by the mighty Tibetan table-land, with its double rampart of the Himalaya and Kuen-lun ranges, and the deserts of Turkestan and Mongolia beyond. Egypt lies securely ensconced between deserts on either hand, and is only open to serious invasion from the north-east.

The north-eastern frontier of Egypt, indeed, is a military problem whose existence very few of us realised before the recent crisis with Turkey over the boundary which separates the Sinai peninsula from Palestine. But it is by no means a problem that we can afford to neglect. As an isolated problem, it is true, the defence of Egypt against a Turkish invasion is not so terribly serious. Though the nominal total of the Ottoman Army exceeds 1,000,000 men, it is not likely, even with the help of the new Hejaz railway, that more than 100,000 could be mobilised effectively on the Egyptian border. Even allowing for the help of some thousands of Bedouin camel-men and for internal disturbance in Egypt, the invading force is one with which Mr. Haldane's expeditionary army ought easily to cope. Whether that were best done by a passive defence of the Suez Canal front, by an expedition into Mount Lebanon to cut the Turkish railway communications with the help of our friends the Druses, and to hold Damascus to ransom, by the seizure of the Gallipoli peninsula and the closing of the Dardanelles, or in half a dozen other ways that might be suggested, is a matter of strategical detail chiefly interesting because it illustrates the enormous military advantages enjoyed by the Power which holds the command of the sea. The real danger lies not in a war with Turkey

alone, but in the conjunction of such a war with a serious conflict elsewhere. In a war with Russia, for instance, the Suez Canal would be of vital importance to us, and the necessity of defending it in force would absorb no small part of the army whose primary objective ought to be the Russian forces in Afghanistan.

The problem of the defence of India against a Russian advance is no doubt a far more serious one. It has long engaged the attention of our political and military authorities at home and in India, though I doubt if even they have, as a rule, realised its magnitude. When we conquered India it was practically an island. A vast distance separated it from the political boundary of Russia, and a still vaster distance from the effective military bases of the Russian armies. Since then not only has the Russian political boundary advanced till it touches ours in the Pamirs on the 'roof of the world,' and is elsewhere only separated from us by the width of Afghanistan, an average of 400 to 500 miles, but the building of railways and the development of her Central Asian territories has given her an enormously increased striking power on that frontier. That tendency is bound to increase. Slowly but surely Europe, with its economic development, its railways and its military power, is advancing across Asia, and bringing the whole weight of the European industrial state, organised on the cheap and effective modern system of universal service, to bear upon an Asiatic Empire, based on primitive agriculture and defended by a small and expensive standing army with no reserve in the country behind it. The only reserve which India has at present lies in the army which we maintain in these islands. That reserve is not only entirely inadequate in numbers, as I hope to show you in a moment, but the distance which separates it from India involves a serious danger, especially in the case of a war fought on sea as well as on land, when

its despatch might have to wait for the definite establishment of our naval superiority. In the long run the defence of India can only be maintained effectively by developing a great industrial community in India itself—in other words, by raising the defective man-power of the Indian population—and by building up in support of India a great reserve of white military power in those regions of the Empire such as South Africa, East Africa, Australia, and New Zealand, which are much closer to India than the Mother Country.

But in the meantime we have got to face the situation as it stands. The probable—indeed, almost inevitable—scene of operations in the case of a war with Russia would be the region of Afghanistan between Kandahar and Herat, the two points which each Power would occupy the moment hostilities broke out. Russia, which could maintain 1,000,000 men in the field in the Far East at the far end of 5000 miles of a single line of railway, could undoubtedly maintain 500,000 to 600,000 at less than half the distance and with a double line of communications in rear, even if fewer local supplies were available in Afghanistan than in Manchuria. What could we put in the field to meet such a force? At the very most the Indian Army will, after Lord Kitchener's reorganisation is complete, be able to send 150,000 men to the front, and that figure may be reduced by one-third if the Afridi tribes should show a desire to molest our communications. Add the whole of Mr. Haldane's expeditionary force to this and we should have a total of 250,000 or 300,000. Supposing the whole of the Territorial Army—if and when it comes into effective being; at present it is only on the 'pathway to reality'—volunteered in a body for service in Afghanistan we might then have a force of over 500,000 men, but I doubt very much if any one would reckon it capable of beating a homogeneous European army of equal size. Moreover

we should have nothing in reserve to make good the terribly rapid wastage of war. Besides, in any case the supposition that more than a fraction of the Territorial Army would so volunteer is absurd. I might go further into the details of the strategical question. But they would not affect the broad conclusion, which is that our military system is wholly inadequate to deal with the problem of the Indian frontier.

But the Indian frontier is by no means the most serious frontier problem we have to face. In Canada we have a frontier of nearly four thousand miles separating us from our greatest potential rival. That frontier has none of the natural advantages enjoyed by the frontier of India. Except for the chain of the Great Lakes it presents not a single natural obstacle to invasion. There is hardly a single important town in Canada, outside of the Maritime Provinces, which is secure from a raid. The whole of inhabited Canada, indeed, has till recently consisted of a narrow ribbon stretched along the American frontier, and it is only now that Canada is gradually beginning to acquire breadth as well as length. This same military weakness is reflected in the Canadian railway system. Owing to the unfortunate projection of the state of Maine into Canadian territory, the main line of the Canadian Pacific, the natural communication between the Maritime Provinces and the rest of the country, passes through American territory. In the North-West both the existing railway systems, the Canadian Pacific and Canadian Northern, are dangerously near the border, both where they leave Lake Superior, and at Winnipeg, which itself is not a hundred miles from the frontier. The building of the Grand Trunk Pacific, which is to run almost in a straight line from Quebec to Winnipeg, through country hitherto largely unexplored, and the construction of the great Georgian Bay Canal from Lake Huron to Montreal by the Ottawa River will undoubtedly enormously improve and render secure the communications

between Eastern and Western Canada. But the dangerously slender waist between Lakes Winnipeg and Manitoba and the frontier remains, and it will be a long time before railways will be built across the narrows on the lakes or to the north of them. An extension of the Canadian Northern to Fort Churchill on Hudson's Bay is, indeed, likely to be carried out soon. During four or five months of the summer that line will give invaluable strategic access to the interior of Canada from this country. Fort Churchill, I may remark, is no farther from Liverpool than Montreal is, and consequently this line not only provides Western Canada with a back door but also brings it over a thousand miles nearer to the Mother Country. Into the details of the strategical defence of Canada I do not propose to enter. But one conclusion is obvious from the position of the chief Canadian centres and of the Canadian railway systems along the American border : and that is, that whatever the relative military strength on both sides, the only sound defensive positions for Canada must be sought well in front of her own borders—in other words, that Canada must begin by attempting a rapid advance into American territory. On the eastern half of the area of operations the map and the natural features of the country clearly indicate the advance of a Canadian force into Maine and Vermont, joining hands with a British force in occupation of Portland. The joint forces could then assume an offensive-defensive position threatening Boston, against which the American troops might batter in vain. Similarly in the west, Winnipeg could best be covered by the menace of an advance on St. Paul—Minneapolis.

But what of the forces available for carrying out such a programme ? The Canadian Militia consists of some 50,000 men, on much the same level of efficiency as our volunteers, and of an untrained reserve of 50,000 more. If arms could be provided—which is by no means certain—these numbers

could easily be doubled or trebled after the outbreak of war. As to the natural fighting quality of Canadians there need be little doubt ; they showed it in the old war with America, whose history is too little known in this country, and they showed it more recently in South Africa. Adding to these our expeditionary force of 150,000 regulars, and a strong volunteer contingent from the United Kingdom, we might conceivably land 200,000 men in the St. Lawrence or on the coast of Maine, while another 100,000 men from India and Australia might be sent to help in the defence of British Columbia, to threaten San Francisco, or seize the Isthmus of Panama, all this providing that we retained undisputed command of the sea. At the outset we might enjoy a decided advantage, for the whole Regular Army of the United States in the country, and the organised and trained State militias, together do not amount to 150,000 men. But how shall we be able to retain it ? The Americans would call their whole manhood under arms as they did in the Civil War, and at the end of a year they could bring 2,000,000 or more imperfectly trained, but by no means despicable, troops into the field, and their forces would grow in numbers and efficiency with every month that followed. Even if we were prepared to take the same step, the inferiority of our numbers, and our distance from the theatre of operations, would make the task an almost impossible one for us, though undoubtedly as long as we retained our naval superiority we should tie down a large part of their forces to coast defence. The one conclusion I can come to from a study of the problem is that Canada can only be effectively defended on three conditions, of which only one is fulfilled at present. The first condition is our naval supremacy. The second is our ability to send over a force at the very least two or three times as large as any contemplated under Mr. Haldane's programme. The third is the establishment in Canada itself of a population of at

least twenty millions capable of putting several hundred thousand men into the field in time of war.

In all this discussion of the Indian and Canadian problem I have assumed that not only the Regular Army, but a great part of the Territorial Army was available for foreign service, and that the Navy was perfectly free to secure their undisturbed passage. I have made practically no allowance at all for the security of the United Kingdom. And yet that security is a matter which we cannot afford to neglect. The United Kingdom, though only a part of the Empire, is still the most important part. A successful invasion of Great Britain would deal a blow at the whole framework of the Empire, which would certainly be serious and might even be fatal. But if our provision for defence, naval as well as military, is inadequate for the tasks I have already discussed, it is obvious there is nothing left over for home defence, and yet it is precisely when we are already engaged in some other part of the world that the danger to this country—the blow at the heart—is most likely to come. Yet what are we to do? Can we afford, if the existence of the Empire is threatened by actual invasion in India or Canada, to hang back and keep our troops at home and our fleets confined to British waters for fear of a problematical attempt at invasion? Can we, on the other hand, afford to leave the citadel of the Empire defenceless? The dilemma is a terrible one, and there is no escaping it.

The fact is—and this is the whole conclusion of the detailed argument I have been trying to lay before you—that the defence of the British Empire is impossible with our present military system and on the present basis of industry and population. We have not got the means to keep up the two-power standard at sea, we have not got the men to defend our frontiers on land. How are we to solve the problem?

There is one solution, I know, that is advocated by many, and that is that we should let the Empire go, and with it all the responsibilities and dangers which it involves, and return once more to the position of an island state. That solution to my mind is an impossible one. In the first place, it is politically impracticable. It is easy enough to persuade the British public to be indifferent to its responsibilities, to shirk the duties and sacrifices which the maintenance of the Empire calls for. It would be quite another matter to ask it deliberately to abandon its Imperial position and all the practical and sentimental advantages connected with it. And yet unless the policy of abandonment were adopted whole-heartedly and unreservedly it would be useless. In the second place, it is no real solution from the military point of view. If the defence of the Empire by the Empire presents a problem of appalling difficulty, the permanent defence of the United Kingdom by the United Kingdom alone is altogether impossible. For the Empire at least provides a material basis of land and sea-power which has only to be developed. But no development can make these islands capable of holding their own against the overwhelming power of the great World States which are springing up around us, a power which would be enormously increased by the disruption of the British Empire. The bare fact of their being islands would be no protection if they were inferior at sea. Madagascar and Cuba have both been conquered in recent years without difficulty. Possibly after our foreign trade had been destroyed, these islands overrun by invading armies, our population impoverished by ruinous indemnities and heavily reduced by emigration, we might eventually be left in peace, because we offered no further temptation worth the risk of provoking the hostility of third parties. But is that a prospect which we are to welcome? Is it for that dull, penurious, and despised existence, lacking alike moral and material great-

ness, offering nothing to fire the ambition or stir the pulses of our people, that we are to abandon the splendid ideal of Empire, the greatest and noblest political vision that has yet dawned upon any people? I think there is only one possible answer to that question.

But if we wish to carry out the great ideal implied in the union of the British communities within the Empire, and in the progressive development of the less civilised communities committed to their charge, we must be prepared to take the steps which alone make the fulfilment of that ideal possible. On the present political and economic basis and with our present military system the Empire cannot be defended. Unless we are prepared to abandon the Empire we must find a new military system and a new political and economic basis. That these are to be found I have no doubt whatever. To my mind, indeed, the solution of both difficulties has long been obvious. What the solution is I will state briefly, not in any controversial spirit, not with any desire to argue the details of the question, but simply in the hope that you may be able to envisage it, not as an isolated and doubtful military or economic proposition, but as an inevitable logical conclusion from the dispassionate contemplation of the present situation of the Empire.

Well then, here is my conclusion. The only military system which will enable us to find the men necessary alike for the defence of these islands and of the land frontiers of the Empire is one under which all the manhood of our own people here and in the Colonies would be trained to the use of arms. The only solution of the economic problem underlying the maintenance of our naval supremacy lies in trying to substitute the Empire for the United Kingdom as the political and economic basis of our power, in promoting every measure that may be calculated to draw the different portions of the Empire closer together, and in

utilising the economic power of the markets of each part of the Empire in order to stimulate the industry and develop the population of every other part. With our vast territories there is no reason in the world why our white population should not be at least double what it is at present, and therefore able without undue sacrifice to bear a far heavier burden of naval and military armament, or why it should not be more evenly distributed throughout the Empire, and therefore better available for the purpose of defence on land and sea. Such a policy involves, no doubt, the abandonment of the insular and *laissez faire* economic policy to which we have been wedded in the past, just as the adoption of universal training involves the abandonment of the extreme theory of individualism which was at one time our boast. But what does that matter compared with the all-important end of national self-preservation? Conscription and protection are words which to many of you, I have no doubt, have an unpleasant ring. But do even they sound as ugly as national destruction? You may not like the remedies I suggest. You may fear that they involve a degree of sacrifice and discomfort which I am convinced they will not involve. You may not believe that they will bring all the immediate and incidental advantages which I, as an ardent believer alike in the principle of national service, and in the principle of Imperial preference, see in them. But are you prepared to face the alternative?

VI

THE 'CASE FOR NATIONAL SERVICE'¹

'Readiness for defence is the strongest of the safeguards of peace.'—*King Edward VII. at Liverpool, July 7, 1909.*

THE case for National Service may be stated in very few words. It is simply this : that our present military arrangements are wholly inadequate to deal with the grave dangers which threaten the existence of the British Empire. The forces available for service oversea are insufficient in number for the task they would have to undertake in a great war. The forces available for home defence are utterly incapable of dealing with a serious invasion, and their incapacity is bound, when the crisis comes, to have the most paralysing effect on the operations both of the oversea forces and of the Navy. Nothing short of some form of universal service can provide the trained men required for home defence or for the necessary expansion in war of our forces oversea, and so avert a national disaster. There are other general arguments, of a political and social character, in favour of National Service. But the case does not rest on these. It rests on a perfectly definite and concrete consideration of our military needs and of our military resources. And it cannot be disposed of except by proof, equally definite and concrete, that the existing voluntary system does in fact meet those needs, or can be made to meet them.

Have Mr. Haldane and Sir Ian Hamilton furnished that proof in their book ? The answer must be that they have not even attempted the task. They have put forward a

¹ Originally contributed as a chapter to *Fallacies and Facts* (John Murray, 1911), Lord Roberts's reply to Sir Ian Hamilton's *Compulsory Service*.

variety of general propositions, more or less supported by argument, to the effect that compulsory service would interfere with recruiting for the Regular Army, that it could not furnish troops for service oversea, and that the forces it could supply for home defence would be superfluous. In still more general terms Sir Ian Hamilton has extolled the voluntary system as 'the creator of our national glory' and the secret of Imperial expansion, and has identified National Service with a spirit of passive defence which would make us 'retrace the steps of Empire' and 'imperil all we stand for in the world.' There are appendices which set out to prove that National Service would cost more than the original estimate of the National Service League. Last, but not least, there is the appendix containing Sir Arthur Wilson's famous Memorandum, which proves conclusively that serious invasion of these islands is impossible—provided always that the enemy carries out his attempt at invasion at a time convenient to the Admiralty and under the conditions most unfavourable to himself. But nowhere, from first page to last of the work, is there the slightest indication of any attempt whatever to estimate the forces which we should actually require in any serious war, or the slightest effort to work out to any reasoned conclusion that intimate interdependence of sea-power and military strength, of home defence and striking power abroad which is the key to the whole problem of Imperial strategy. Sir Ian Hamilton, indeed, with the most engaging simplicity, leaves these matters to Mr. Haldane: 'Have they (our military needs) ever been clearly stated? If not, it is for you to make the statement.' And Mr. Haldane, in his turn, discreetly evades the appeal by bland generalities intended to diffuse the comfortable, but wholly misleading, impression that the General Staff and the Committee of Imperial Defence have seen to all this, and that our forces are, in fact, at present organised on the basis of our strategic requirements.

But the question of our actual requirements in war cannot be set aside in this fashion. It goes to the root of the whole controversy, and till it is settled the discussion of the relative merits of the Voluntary and National systems is entirely in the air. If Sir Ian Hamilton and Mr. Haldane had begun by proving that our present system does provide us, or ever could provide us, with an army capable of defeating the forces which it may have to encounter in a great war, then the rest of their arguments would have come in appropriately as bearing on the further question whether the same end might or might not be secured more efficiently by National Service. In the absence of any such proof, or even any attempt at proof, the greater part of their disquisition on the defects and difficulties of this or that form of compulsory service is entirely irrelevant. What those difficulties amount to, how far they are real, and how far the mere products of Sir Ian Hamilton's ingenious fancy, is a matter well worth careful examination at a subsequent stage in the argument. But our first task is to clear the ground of the main issue: is National Service necessary for our security, or is it not?

The problem before us is a perfectly definite one. We have to ascertain the strength of the hostile forces, or combinations of forces, against which, on any reasonable calculation of probabilities, we may have to take the field. With these we have to compare our own actual or potential fighting strength as provided by voluntary service. If that comparison gives us a fair prospect of success, well and good. If not, then our main contention is proved, and what we have to do next is to show in what specific way the principle of National Service can be most effectively applied to suit our peculiar needs in war and peace.

Before dealing with the strategical problem of Imperial security in its detailed aspects, we must first get clear in

our minds some of the general considerations which govern that problem. Not the least important of these is the relation of strategy to foreign policy. There is a dangerous half-truth which asserts that armaments depend on policy—dangerous, because it encourages the delusion that pacific intentions alone are enough to secure peace, and that armaments are an ambitious luxury which can always be cut down by a Government resolved on a meek and un-aggressive foreign policy. The full truth is that armaments and policy are essentially interdependent and complementary. A maladroit or aggressive policy may, indeed, provoke unnecessary friction and create hostile combinations, which in turn will necessitate an increase of expenditure on armaments; a prudent and skilful policy may smooth over difficulties and pave the way to useful alliances which will form an effective contribution to the armed strength of the nation. But the converse is no less true, and, for practical purposes, even more important. Whatever the object and character of a nation's foreign policy, the success of that policy is directly dependent on the actual fighting strength behind it. The money and effort spent on armaments are frequently spoken of as a sort of insurance, an expenditure whose benefits are only reaped when some fortuitous circumstance has precipitated war. But they correspond far more closely to the cash reserve of some great bank, which, though stored away in its vaults, and produced only in emergencies, is yet in daily employment through the medium of its note circulation. Just so in times of peace the army and navy of a Great Power are used continuously and to their fullest value through the channels of diplomacy. At no time since Trafalgar has the British Navy been employed so fully and so successfully as in the last twenty years. The peaceful partition of tropical Africa, the undisturbed settlement of the South African struggle, the isolation of the Spanish-American and

Russo-Japanese conflicts, the establishment of friendly relations with France and Russia—all these are but the most striking examples of its successful work during a critical period in our history. Nor has the mighty German army been idle since it fired its last shells into Paris. The acquisition of a great Colonial Empire, and the vigorous defence of German trade interests in many fields, most notably of recent years in Morocco and the Near East, are the direct fruits of a military system which, according to Sir Ian Hamilton, involves the constant sacrifice of Imperial ambitions on the altar of home defence!

No less misleading than the idea that skilful diplomacy can provide a substitute for armed strength is the idea that such a substitute can be found in alliances. The basis of every alliance is mutual advantage, and it is only the Power that can contribute effective strength to an alliance that can hope to get anything out of it. It was not Prussia's need for assistance, but Prussia's strength, that enabled Bismarck to secure the support of Italy against Austria in 1866. It is those who can best help themselves who will always find allies to help them.

Foreign policy and military policy are, in fact, only different aspects of the same thing—the external policy of a nation. And that external policy is, in the main, not an arbitrary plan of action devised either by diplomats or by strategists, but the logical and inevitable outcome of certain broad geographical and economic conditions. The geographical distribution of the territories of the British Empire, the diffusion of our economic interests outside those territories, the territorial, economic, and military expansion of other States—these are the primary and permanent factors which govern the external policy of the Empire. It is these factors which bring the Empire into contact with other Powers and involve the dangers of war. The more numerous the points of contact, the

greater the likelihood of friction ; the more important the objects of economic rivalry between us and other Powers, the more serious the danger of war ; the stronger those Powers, the stronger must be the forces with which we propose to meet them. These are the elementary considerations which must govern the framework of our scheme of Imperial defence. The diplomatic situation at any particular period will naturally affect our strategic dispositions for the time being. But it is much too unstable a thing to furnish a secure foundation on which to lay the main lines of a naval or military organisation which it may take a generation to build up. Those main lines consequently must take no account of present international relations, but must be laid with a view to dealing with any Power with which the Empire can possibly come in contact on sea or on land. There can be no such thing in sound strategy as the exclusion from our calculations of any foreign Power, however friendly at the moment, or however much we may dislike the idea of coming into conflict with it. Those are excellent reasons for continuing to cultivate friendship, but not for neglecting to make provision against the breaking up of friendship under the stress of a serious conflict of interests.

The British Empire is scattered all over the world. How it came to be where it is is a matter of history. The essential point to remember is that during the period in which it attained its present dimensions and political constitution it was entirely outside the great world of international conflict. For eighty years after Trafalgar we practically had the outer world to ourselves. The United States were absorbed in their internal affairs ; elsewhere we were confronted only by weak Oriental monarchies or by savage tribes. The growth of the Empire was attended by plenty of miscellaneous, though not really serious, fighting. But no broad conceptions either of strategy or of internal

organisation dominated the acquisition and development of our territories. In a haphazard and sporadic fashion, without much thought of the morrow, the British Empire grew up over the face of the earth. The question of the internal political and economic organisation of the Empire does not directly concern the present controversy. It is enough to insist in passing that it is the absence of such internal organisation which at present throws almost the whole burden and responsibility of Imperial defence on the Mother Country, and that in the long run, failing some complete reconstruction, both of our Imperial constitution and of the economic basis of our policy, no efforts or sacrifices on the part of the Mother Country can avert the dissolution of the Empire from within, or its forcible disruption at the hands of stronger, wealthier, and better organised Powers. What is more immediately to the point of our inquiry, however, is that it was during this period of undisturbed and unmenaced expansion—of petty and disconnected military operations, involving no general strategical conceptions, and calling for no serious national effort—that our military system reached its present shape, a shape which in all essential respects has remained unchanged for the last forty years.

In the interval the whole world-situation has been transformed. The expansion of England has been followed by the expansion of Europe. The expansion of America and the expansion of Asia have already begun. The British Empire, which was once out of the world, far removed from the din of great battles, is rapidly finding itself in the very midst of the arena of the world-struggle for power and economic development. At every point its scattered territories and vested interests are in contact with the expanding activities and ambitions of other nations. With the exception of Austria-Hungary, there is not a single Great Power with which our frontiers do not march, or with

which our interests may not clash seriously at any moment. So far from being a protection, as it formerly was, the geographical distribution of the Empire has become in the last twenty years a steadily increasing source of danger. It multiplies enormously not only the occasions which give rise to wars, but also the probability of those wars being waged against us not by single Powers, but by coalitions. We cannot stand in everybody's way without expecting to be jostled. We cannot in an age of fierce land-hunger hold up for our own use territory enough for half a dozen mighty empires, and think we can always avert hostility by amiable intentions, or isolate our opponents by skilful diplomacy. Least of all have we any reason to expect that a military system framed, in the days of our unchallenged naval supremacy, to cope from time to time with native risings in India, with Afghans, Zulus, or Sudanese, is really calculated to enable us to confront the menace of armed coalition between Powers that count their trained soldiers by the million and will soon be counting their Dreadnoughts by the squadron.

The danger of finding ourselves at war with more than one Great Power at a time must be reckoned as a permanent factor in the situation, and all our naval and military preparations must take account of it. From this it at once becomes clear that the 'Two-Power Standard' is not a mere arbitrary and fanciful convention, a kind of over-insurance in the matter of naval protection, but a natural consequence of the extent and distribution of our territories and interests in the midst of expanding and ambitious Powers, and an essential measure of our requirements. From this definition, too, of its real meaning it is clear that the 'Two-Enemy Standard' applies to the military as well as to the naval problem. The only difference is that while at sea we are bound to maintain at all times, if we wish to be safe, a superiority to the total naval forces

of any two Powers whatever, our concern on land is only with those Powers which are in a position to invade our territories, or, in certain eventualities, the territory of our allies. Nor are we concerned with their total land forces, but only with those that can be brought against us in the field. What enters into our consideration is not the whole Russian army, but the Russian force which can be put in the field in Afghanistan ; not the whole German army, but the force which can be landed in England, or which, in the case of continental operations, can be spared from dealing with the French.

Again, over and above the danger of having to deal with a coalition of hostile foreign Powers, we cannot afford to overlook the possibility of internal trouble. Vast regions of the Empire are inhabited by alien races, often half-civilised, in many cases still wholly savage. Our rule in India, to begin with, was established by military conquest, and cannot for generations to come dispense with the support of military power against possible outbreaks, local or general. There has been an enormous extension of our territories in Africa during the last twenty years. The acquisition of this Empire in Africa, like that of our Empire in India, has been the work of the merest handful of Englishmen, aided by small bodies of native troops. But, as the Indian Mutiny showed, the forces sufficient to win an Empire may well prove inadequate to hold it. Nor can we treat this internal military problem as disconnected with the external problem. It is precisely the occasion of serious internal trouble in India or Egypt that a hostile Power or hostile coalition would select as suitable for striking the long-prepared blow, while nothing would give such direct encouragement to the ever-simmering elements of discontented ambition in various portions of our Empire as the outbreak of a great war, marked, perhaps, by a series of grave reverses. And this connection between internal and

external danger is one which the immense development of telegraphy and other means of communication—the whole modern shrinkage of the world, in fact—has only accentuated.

It is, in truth, a gigantic responsibility which rests upon the shoulders of the British nation. Is it awake to the meaning of that responsibility? If not, then are its political leaders doing their duty to the nation by shaking it from its slumber? And are the professional advisers of those leaders doing their duty by a fearless exposition of the effort required to avert disaster?

But to return to our theme. First and foremost, then, we must keep in mind that ours is an oceanic Empire. It was won by sea-power, and without sea-power it cannot be maintained. The great oceans of the world are its internal communications, and their control by hostile fleets would mean for the whole Empire instant paralysis and eventual disruption. Again, the economic fabric of every part of the Empire depends in a greater or less degree upon sea-borne commerce. In the case of the United Kingdom the immense majority of the population exists by the working up of imported raw materials and the consumption of imported foodstuffs. The suspension or serious dislocation of British commercial shipping would inflict heavy losses upon every portion of the Empire. But it would be an appalling disaster to the industrial population of the United Kingdom. The safety of British shipping on the high seas, and the free passage of troops, munitions of war, and food-supplies between the different parts of the Empire, are objects which must be secured in war at all hazards. They can be secured directly by naval power alone, and the maintenance of a navy capable of securing them against any two hostile Powers must always remain a fundamental principle of Imperial strategy.

But if the British Empire is oceanic it is also continental.

Of its eleven and a half million square miles of territory, eight millions are on the continents of Asia, Africa, and America. Its land frontier extends for some 28,000 miles—four times the extent of the frontiers of any other Power. Fortunately, only a comparatively small portion of that frontier is menaced by formidable neighbours. In practice we have only to consider two military problems of the first magnitude arising out of our position as a continental Empire—the defence of our position in India, and the defence of Canada. What these two problems involve in the way of military effort will be considered later. For the moment, the only essential point to keep in view is that, in the main, they can be solved only by military strength. Another fundamental condition of Imperial strategy, therefore, is a military system capable of dealing with either Russia or the United States in the defence of India or Canada. That this condition, at any rate as regards the problem of Canadian defence, is habitually ignored, does not alter its fundamental necessity. It is no use trying to blink unpleasant realities by calling the Americans ‘cousins,’ and proclaiming war with them to be ‘unthinkable.’ Unthinkable! There is no such word in international politics. With every desire to maintain and strengthen the most friendly and intimate relations with the United States, the fact still remains that they are a foreign Power. If a serious conflict of economic interests or the expansion of their ambitions should commend war with us to American statesmen, no considerations of sentiment on their side, no conceivable degree of meekness or forbearance on ours, nothing but a practical comparison of our fighting power with theirs will affect their decision. After all, we have been at war with the United States in the past. It is not fifteen years since President Cleveland practically threatened war over Venezuela. Only the other day the Speaker-Elect of the American House of

Representatives openly proclaimed the annexation of Canada as the goal of American policy. There is no reason to take such an utterance too seriously—if we did, we should have to consider war inevitable—but it may serve as a useful corrective to the sort of gush which takes in none but those who wish to be taken in, among whom, indeed, it is to be feared, must be reckoned the great majority of British politicians.

So far we have considered those portions of the task of Imperial defence which primarily devolve upon one particular arm of our forces, and cannot be directly carried out by the other. But there are other portions of the task where the work could in theory be done by either arm acting separately, but in practice can only be done effectively and economically by both arms acting in conjunction. Let us take the defence of an insular naval base and coaling station like Malta. In theory Malta could be defended entirely by the Navy, or entirely by the Army. In practice it would be absurd to garrison Malta with a military force capable of holding it indefinitely against all comers, without taking account of the presence of a British fleet in the Mediterranean, and of its power of interfering with any operations conducted against the island. On the other hand, it would be no less absurd to remove altogether the military garrison of Malta, and assign to the Mediterranean squadron the whole task of protecting its base. That task would be at once refused by the Admiralty as calculated to hamper its strategic freedom of action. Even the suggestion that bases like Malta, though still garrisoned by soldiers or marines, should at any rate be under the control of the Admiral commanding the station has in the past been rejected by the Admiralty, on the ground that not only the ships, but also the mind of the Admiral, must be kept absolutely concentrated on the main objective—the enemy's fighting fleet. Theoretically, no doubt, it

might be possible to spend the money devoted to the garrison of Malta on extra destroyers and submarines specially earmarked for local defence. But such a scheme would not work in practice, and it would, moreover, fail to provide what the present arrangement does provide—a reservoir of military force available on occasion at other points—*e.g.* Egypt or Crete—where destroyers and submarines could be of no use.

But what is true of a minor base like Malta in its relation to the Mediterranean squadron, and to military problems in the Mediterranean area, is equally true of the United Kingdom, the main base and arsenal of our fleets, in relation to the whole of our naval and military strategy. To make our military arrangements for the defence of these Islands as if the Navy did not exist—on the supposition, let us say, that our opponents will be able to transport their troops to our shores undisturbed for weeks and months on end—is an absurdity which no one has ever suggested. But the even more preposterous assumption that our Navy can never be distracted from the problem of covering England for more than a few hours, and that in considering our arrangements for home defence we can ignore our general strategical needs for a large reservoir of military force—that assumption is continually being made. It underlies the whole of Mr. Haldane's and Sir Ian Hamilton's disquisitions, and is nowhere more patent than in Sir Arthur Wilson's unfortunate Memorandum. To get rid of this dangerous delusion, to realise clearly the need for a strong military force in this country, both in order to free the Navy for its fighting work, and to enable us to face Imperial tasks which have got to be faced, but which the Navy alone cannot deal with, is an indispensable preliminary to any sound grasp of the whole complex problem of Imperial security.

This conjunction and interaction of naval and military strength is as essential in offence as in defence. A military

force strong enough to seize the enemy's naval bases may be a vital factor in determining success at sea. It was the Japanese army which paved the way for the crowning naval victory at Tsushima, by destroying the Russian fleet at Port Arthur. It was not Japanese sailors alone, but Japanese sailors and soldiers working in conjunction, that won the command of the Pacific. Conversely, many an example in our own military history—most signally the Peninsular War—has proved the advantage of 'the shifting base and incalculable line of communications,' to use Sir Ian Hamilton's phrase, which belongs to the army which enjoys the command of the sea. Emerson has described in graphic terms the immensely enhanced striking power of an amphibious army. 'The men who have built a ship . . . have acquired much more than a ship. Now arm them, and every shore is at their mercy; for if they have not numerical superiority where they anchor they have only to sail a mile or two to find it. Bonaparte's art of war—namely of concentrating force on the point of attack—must always be theirs who have the choice of the battleground.' There is only one qualification which it is necessary to add: it is little use enjoying this immense strategical advantage unless we have an army strong enough to turn it to account.

There is no more dangerous delusion than that the command of the sea is an end in itself. The end is security in peace by the possession of strength adequate to ensure victory in war. Victory means crushing an opponent, not merely denying him the use of a certain area of operations. And the latter is all that, in most cases, the command of the sea can effect. As Lord Roberts has pointed out in the first part of this work (*Fallacies and Facts*), it took ten years of struggle to make good our naval triumph at Trafalgar. Our command of the sea was not ratified till Vittoria, Leipzig, and Waterloo put an end to Napoleon's

dream of a confederated Europe outbuilding and crushing Britain by the irresistible weight of its economic power. And in the meantime the burden of maintaining the struggle, of paying heavy subsidies to allies, and of incurring fresh complications, such as the war with the United States, brought England almost to the verge of ruin. It is an interesting speculation to consider what would have been the saving in blood and money to England and Europe if we could have followed up, or even preceded Trafalgar with an army sufficient to have made it impossible for Napoleon to concentrate his forces for Austerlitz.

The need for military strength oversea, whether our own or that of our allies, has always been recognised by British statesmanship in the past. And we have needed it, not only to complete and make good our naval success, but in order to prevent a condition of things which would have made naval success impossible for us. From Queen Elizabeth down to the younger Pitt, our statesmen have at intervals been confronted with one transcending menace—the possibility of a great European military Power concentrating in its hands, by conquest or by alliances, an economic strength and shipbuilding resources which would nullify all our efforts to maintain command of the sea, and expose England to invasion in overwhelming force. It was to avert this menace that we helped the Dutch against Spain, depriving the Great Armada of ships and harbours, whose use might well have made it irresistible. It was for the same end that William of Orange, Chatham, and Pitt formed their coalitions against France. The maintenance of the European balance of power against the domination of a single Power has been of vital consequence to us in the past, and may be no less vital to us in the near future. The only way to maintain that balance is to give effective military support to those European Powers who are prepared to resist the attempt at domination. In the days of our

commercial preponderance and of mercenary armies, that effective support could be given in the shape of money subsidies. In these days, when we enjoy no such marked pre-eminence in wealth and industry, and when wars are fought by nations trained and organised as armies, neither our subsidies nor the additional forces they might provide would go very far. The only thing that will count are the men we can put in the field. And these will count for nothing if they are not sufficient to redress the balance of military strength in favour of our allies. Unless we can hold out a reasonable prospect of victory as the result of alliance, our potential allies will of necessity make the best terms they can with the dominant Power, even if those terms include co-operation in the task of crushing England.

From the foregoing general analysis of the problem of Imperial defence one thing stands out clearly—the intimate interdependence of Army and Navy. Not only does the Empire require a supreme Navy to maintain its internal unity and protect its commerce, and an Army strong enough to defend its continental territories, but each arm for its own purposes requires the effective and close co-operation of the other. Any deficiency in the one arm throws a heavy and unnecessary burden on the other, or renders it incapable of fulfilling its proper work. Without a Navy strong enough to command the sea, our Army can neither reinforce a threatened frontier nor strike home in an enemy's territory. Without adequate military provision for the defence of our naval bases, and above all of the central base and heart of our whole Imperial system, the United Kingdom, our Navy will be paralysed and weakened in action. Without an Army strong enough to redress the balance of power in Europe against the pre-meditated continental domination of a single Power, the Navy may have to face the prospect of being hopelessly outbuilt in peace, and of being crushed by overwhelming

numbers whenever our rivals think the time is ripe for the settling of old scores, and for opening a new chapter in the world's history.

We can now pass on to the actual concrete task which confronts our Army and Navy to-day, and consider the adequacy of those two arms of the service to cope with it in war—in other words, their adequacy to give us the security which is essential to the prosperous and peaceful development of British civilisation.

The Two-Power Standard of naval strength is the very lowest measure of security we can allow ourselves at sea. Are we as a nation to-day honestly facing all that is involved in our undertaking to maintain that standard? Sea-power under modern conditions is based on money-power, on industrial and economic strength. A Two-Power Standard in ships presupposes, in the long run, something like a Two-Power Standard in taxable wealth and industrial output. That condition we were able to fulfil throughout the prolonged naval competition with France and Russia which marked the close of the last century. For every pound the allies put down we put down our guinea. For every ship they launched, we launched a bigger and better one. Do we enjoy the same advantages of greater wealth and greater industrial strength over Germany and the United States, the Powers which are now taking up the competition? Mr. Haldane airily assures us that it is 'comparatively easy for us to keep well ahead of any possible adversary for many years to come.' The wish, it is to be feared, is in his case father to the thought. The formidable nature of the German menace to our command of the sea has seriously startled the British nation in the last few years. An expenditure on new construction and armament during the last three financial years of £29,365,000 as against our £34,531,000 ought certainly to have opened

even Mr. Haldane's eyes. Whether in 1914 our 'capital ships' will be to the Germans as 30 to 21, or whatever the precise figure may be then or a year or two later, we have already reached the point at which the two-to-one standard has clearly ceased to exist. But what is more serious, and what is still apparently unrealised, is that this is but the beginning. With her sixty-five millions of people, her enormous industrial growth, her much lighter incidence of taxation, there is nothing, except certain temporary financial difficulties due to the complex arrangements of her federal system, to prevent Germany raising her naval expenditure from £20,000,000 to £30,000,000, or even £40,000,000 in the near future. She can well afford it. Moreover, Germany enjoys a great advantage over us in the absence of other naval commitments. She has no important interests in the Mediterranean, across the Atlantic, or in the Pacific and Indian Oceans to absorb part of her naval strength. Her naval general staff has not to waste a thought on home defence—in a war with England it would waste very few thoughts even on the defence of German commerce. The whole German fleet can be concentrated for the one single purpose of offence, and will be spent unreservedly on that object. By victory at sea Germany stands to gain the first position in the world, by defeat she stands to lose nothing beyond the ships themselves and a few colonies of comparatively little value. Conditions such as these, coupled with the almost certain prospect of having the initiative and striking the first blow, add fifty per cent. to the fighting value of a fleet. Nor can we reckon with the German fleet alone. Austria-Hungary is beginning to lay down Dreadnoughts, which will, to all intents and purposes, form the nucleus of a German Mediterranean fleet, the rest of which will be furnished by Italy, reluctant but unable—in the absence of effective military help from us—to resist the pressure on her north-eastern frontier.

Less immediately threatening, but even more formidable in the long run, is the naval competition of the United States—coupled as it is with the power of bringing direct military pressure to bear on us—and of Japan. The Americans spend £27,000,000 a year on their navy to-day. They could spend £50,000,000 a year without really feeling it; they probably will be spending it before twenty years are passed. Japan, if less wealthy, is nevertheless advancing by extraordinary strides. In neither case is existing friendship or alliance sufficient warrant for wholly disregarding the change in the naval situation and treating it as irrelevant to our safety.

The pressure on our resources is getting greater year by year. With an annual naval expenditure of over £44,000,000 in immediate prospect we have already practically abandoned the Two-Power Standard. Even to maintain our present relative position to our chief competitors is likely to involve naval estimates of £60,000,000 or £80,000,000 in a future by no means remote. Double our present naval estimates! Still, there are plenty of persons who can remember when the naval estimates were about one-third of what they are to-day, and when they would have gasped at the mere suggestion of our present naval budget. It is no use gasping. We have got to face the facts, however unpleasant they may be, and find ways and means of meeting them. We cannot abandon the command of the sea, cost what it may. But there is one thing we can do, and that is to see that the Navy shall not be burdened by any duty which might detract from its full fighting efficiency, if that duty can be performed more economically in other ways.

Immense as is the task it has to fulfil, the actual organisation of the Navy is comparatively simple. It is framed with a view to one object, and one object only—the most serious war that is likely to break out. Subsidiary tasks,

such as those of suppressing slavery and gun-running, or of 'showing the flag' in out-of-the-way regions of the world, have of late years been reduced to very small dimensions. The organisation of our land forces, on the other hand, is necessarily much more complex. Apart from the contingency of serious wars of the first magnitude, provision has to be made for those smaller wars which are incidental to the growth and consolidation of Imperial rule among Eastern or savage races, for the maintenance of a sufficient force of white troops in India and Egypt, and for the garrisoning of naval bases and coaling stations. This complexity differentiates, and must always differentiate, our military system from that of continental Powers like Germany or Russia. No one disputes this fact, though Sir Ian Hamilton and Mr. Haldane, by constant reiteration, would have us believe that it is ignored by the advocates of National Service. The question at issue is a very different one, namely, the adequacy of our present military system, however organised, to provide for all of these requirements, and in particular for the first and most vital of all—serious war.

In considering this question it is essential to bear in mind that when the existing organisation was framed by Lord Cardwell forty years ago the contingency of serious war on a large scale hardly entered into our calculations at all. There was no system of strategic railways from the centre of Russia to the Afghan border in those days, and the danger of any effective force ever being brought to bear upon India seemed excessively remote. The feeling of Imperial Unity was at its lowest, and the idea of resisting to the death an American attempt upon Canada was nowhere seriously entertained. Still less was there any idea of operations on a large scale on the continent of Europe, though the existence of a treaty obligation to assist in preserving Belgian neutrality was recognised in theory.

The main object of the Cardwell reorganisation was the provision of a field force primarily for home defence and, in the second place, available, at any rate in part, for suppressing an outbreak in India or for coping with any other military task on a similar scale. Considering the circumstances in which the present organisation was framed, there is, at any rate on the face of it, no particular reason for assuming that it provides a force capable of dealing with the great strategical problems of our generation.

This view is only confirmed by a study of the organisation itself. The principle of the Cardwellian system is that the recruits for each unit quartered in peace in India, or in the various Colonies or naval stations, are organised at home in a corresponding 'linked' training unit, which can be mobilised for war by the inclusion of reservists. That is to say, the force that can be mobilised in war is exactly equal, in number of units, to the total force stationed abroad. But the strength of this latter force depends on a whole variety of different local conditions which have no bearing whatever on the question of the size of the force required for a serious campaign against a great Power. A reduction of the British troops in South Africa, or the substitution of Indian for British troops in Egypt, can in no possible sense simplify the strategical problem of operations against the Russians in Afghanistan or against the Germans in Belgium. Nevertheless, it would automatically reduce the field force available for those operations. To quote the words once used by Mr. Churchill in support of Mr. Haldane: 'If the numbers necessary to maintain the troops abroad can be reduced, then a reduction will be made in the size of the Expeditionary Force, and the scheme of the Secretary of State for War will not lose in its harmony and efficiency.' As if there can be any other harmony in our military arrangements which matters except harmony with our requirements in war, or any other efficiency we need look

to except that which will secure victory for our forces ! Can we conceive the French General Staff determining the strength of the forces which they mean to put in the field against Germany by some fixed multiple of the garrisons required for Algeria, Tonkin, and Madagascar ? Or a German statesman suggesting that the reduction of the forces required to chase Hottentots in South-West Africa would enable the army corps at Metz to be disbanded without loss of harmony or efficiency ? A more absurdly unstrategical system it would be difficult to imagine, and its only explanation is that it belongs to a period before any serious problems of strategy had forced themselves on the attention of our military authorities.

Let us now consider the actual numbers which the existing system provides. There are, first of all, permanently abroad some 76,000 officers and men of the Regular Army in India, and 37,000 in Egypt and minor garrisons. At home there are some 128,000 Regulars with the colours, and about the same strength of the Regular Reserve,¹ the latter an abnormally high figure, due to the three years' service introduced by Lord Midleton, and reflecting the higher peace establishment since cut down by Mr. Haldane. Behind these there is the Special Reserve, some 63,000 strong, available for drafts and certain other special purposes. Lastly, there is the Territorial Force, some 267,000 strong ; the Territorial Force Reserve and the Veteran Reserve recently inaugurated by Mr. Haldane exist, as yet, chiefly in the imaginative eloquence of their author.

On paper this does not seem an altogether inconsiderable force, when all its items are added together irrespective of their actual fighting value, or their availability for any specific purpose. To do so has always been our official habit, and Mr. Haldane has developed it to the point at which he can speak without a smile of 'twenty organised

¹ Not including some 7000 reservists living abroad.

divisions,' or of a 'long range army of nearly 300,000'—in the one case treating the Territorial Force as a serious army to be reckoned at its face value, in the other reckoning the troops locked up in India, Egypt, and our naval garrisons as if they were available for general purposes. But the apotheosis of sheer buncombe on this subject is achieved by Sir Ian Hamilton when he speaks of our miscellaneous forces at home composing 'a fighting organisation of something like half a million men,' and gives us to understand that these are 'military effectives available for overseas offensive purposes.'

The real situation is as follows: Of the Regulars with the colours not more than about 80,000 are men actually fit for service overseas; the rest are recruits of less than one year's training, or under twenty years of age. On mobilisation, the Expeditionary Force of six divisions would have to draw to the extent of over 80,000 on the Reserve, and to the extent of some 15,000 on certain special contingents from the Special Reserve and from the Territorial Force. The total force available on mobilisation for service overseas is not more than 170,000, even on paper, and for these there would be enough drafts from the surplus Reserve and Special Reserve, and from young soldiers maturing, to enable them to keep the field for six months—providing casualties were not excessive, and that no drafts were required meanwhile for any of the troops in India, Egypt, or the naval garrisons. As a matter of fact, the War Office is not in a position to mobilise 170,000 men, or anything like that figure, immediately on the outbreak of war. Unless units left at home, depots, and Special Reserve were absolutely stripped of every single officer, there would be a shortage of over 1000 officers. There is practically no provision whatever for the wastage of officers in war or for the need of officers for special services or for the organisation of improvised forces. Fifty thousand horses are required

to complete on mobilisation, and to secure these and arrange for their collection, distribution to units, and fitting with harness and saddlery, would take considerable time. If four divisions with cavalry division, artillery, etc., say 100,000 men in all, could be mobilised in a week or ten days, the War Office authorities would have every reason to congratulate themselves. The force available for over-sea service may thus be reckoned as amounting at the most to 100,000 men at the outbreak of war. Another 70,000 might be put in the field in the next two months. The whole force might be maintained at full strength for six months or so, after which it would have to rely on newly enlisted recruits or volunteers from the Territorial Force to keep it from dwindling away to nothing. There is no provision whatever for expansion beyond the original six divisions, except in so far as units or individuals of the Territorial Force may volunteer for foreign service.

Mere numerical strength is not everything, and in the warfare of the future individual tactical skill, intelligence, self-reliance, endurance, and, above all, discipline in the highest sense of the word, the active, conscientious, unwavering resolve to carry out instructions, will count for more than ever before. There is no idea more attractive to the student of war than that of an army moderate in numbers, highly mobile, and immensely efficient, defeating vastly superior forces of partly trained conscripts. Unfortunately, it is no use deluding ourselves with the idea that our present Expeditionary Force corresponds to this description, or can be made to correspond to it under the existing system. Sir Ian Hamilton, it is true, in one passage describes it as composed of the 'finest troops in Europe,' in virtue of the long service of the reservists in its ranks. But Sir Ian has also drawn us a very different picture. He describes the material which enlists in our Army as composed, to the extent of four-fifths, of 'weedy,

overgrown youths,'¹ 'hungry hobbledehoys,' who 'come to us because they cannot get a job at fifteen shillings a week'—in other words, of the least promising material of which to make the intelligent, alert, strong-willed, enduring type of individual postulated for our imaginary army of experts. In another passage designed to extol the Territorial Force, he contrasts the 'fourteen shillings to fifteen shillings a week hobbledehoy,' from the point of view of receptivity to training, with the 'twenty-five to thirty shillings a week man,' forgetting, apparently, that it is precisely this latter type that composes the great bulk of the national armies of other countries, as it will of our own national army when we secure one. In *A Staff-Officer's Scrap-book*, indeed, we have the comparison made directly in favour of the national army. There, speaking of conscription in Japan, Sir Ian says, 'The Army is the cream of the nation. How different from us!'

Taking a perfectly dispassionate view of our Regular Army, it can hardly be gainsaid that the material from which it is recruited is physically and intellectually below the average standard of armies based on the principle of National Service. The training of the material, moreover, under the voluntary system, which has to allow recruits to dribble in as it suits their fancy, can never compare with the systematic training of a national army where all the recruits are set to work on the same day, and where the one idea is to teach the utmost possible amount in a given period. Taking one consideration with another, it is probably not till the end of four years' service that our soldier is the equal in proficiency, as he is in age, of the

¹ The nominal age of enlistment is eighteen, but little effort is made to ensure it. On February 18, 1911, a deserter from the Royal Fusiliers was charged before the West London police magistrate, who, after ascertaining his age to be fifteen years and nine months, remanded him to the Children's Court as 'a mere child dressed up as a soldier . . . a fine sample of the soldiers by whom this country is defended.'

continental soldier at the end of his two years. On that basis our oversea battalions, mostly men with between three and eight years' service and permanently mobilised, may not unfairly be reckoned as superior to continental troops in training, homogeneity, and cohesion. The same advantage can hardly be claimed for the battalions of the Expeditionary Force, composed only in part of highly seasoned mature men, and for the rest made up of material less well trained than that of continental armies. Nor can the drafts for the Expeditionary Force, drawn either from Section D—men who have been more than four years away from the Army—or from the Special Reserve, which has only six months' training, compare with the homogeneous drafts supplied under a national system. We have no reason to fear that our Expeditionary Force could not hold its own, man for man, with any foreign troops. But it would be a pure delusion to imagine that there is anything in our conditions of service which would justify us in reckoning it at more than its actual numerical strength.

There remains the Territorial Force, with a nominal strength of 315,000 and an actual strength of 267,000 officers and men. This is the old Volunteer Force with an improved organisation and with an obligation to do six months' continuous service after the outbreak of war. The members of this force do a certain number of drills and are supposed to be trained in camp from a week to a fortnight every year. Here, again, it must not be supposed for a moment that either the numbers or the training of the force have been based on any strategical considerations. The numbers are roughly those of the existing Volunteers and Yeomanry when Mr. Haldane introduced his scheme of reorganisation.¹ At one time, indeed, Mr. Haldane talked

¹ 'We have existing material to the extent of about three hundred thousand officers and men.'—Memorandum of Feb. 25, 1907, outlining Mr. Haldane's proposals.

airily of a 'nation in arms' of 900,000 men, but, like a good practical politician, he has long since trimmed his sense of the Empire's requirements in war to what can be conveniently obtained in peace. As for the training of the force, it just represents what volunteers can do without serious inconvenience or prejudice to their business. Low as the standard of training is, by no means the whole of the force conforms to it. In April 1910 there were 100,000 who had not qualified in musketry, and in the following summer 1321 officers and 24,000 men failed to put in any attendance in camp, while only 168,000 put in fifteen days' training or over. Add the fact that 83,000 non-commissioned officers and men, or nearly a third of the whole, are under twenty years of age; that none of the units are provided with the entrenching tools, wagons, harness, and other equipment, without which they could not take the field; that 86,000 horses will be required to mobilise the force, and will have to be scrambled for at a time when the Expeditionary Force will be ransacking the country for the 50,000 horses it needs itself, and will certainly impound from their livery stables those invaluable steeds whose complacent backs manage in peace time to accommodate three or four yeomen apiece; add the weakness of the artillery and the lack of training and experience on the part of the officers, and then listen to Mr. Haldane talking away serenely about his 'fourteen organised divisions,' or his 'swiftly moving central field force,' ready at any moment to crush an invader by sheer weight of numbers!

Sir Ian Hamilton claims that there are brigades of Territorials ready to fight to-morrow, and capable of giving 'the best of enemies a bellyful,' if in a superiority of three to one, though liable to go absolutely to pieces for a time if defeated. This may be so, but the isolated fighting value of a picked Territorial brigade, and the fighting value of, say, 100,000 average Territorials attempting to work

and move as a field army are totally different things. Naturally, the Territorial Force would improve rapidly on embodiment. But the rapidity with which untrained troops can be licked into shape depends mainly on the officers ; and in this case the great bulk of the officers will be far more in need of training than even the men. Sir Ian Hamilton, in quoting the case of the City Imperial Volunteers in South Africa, who had eight regular officers, and of the Volunteer Companies, which were simply incorporated in their regular battalions, overlooks this vital distinction between his examples and the Territorial Force. The latter, on the departure of the Expeditionary Army, will be almost wholly thrown on its own devices, and will probably have to surrender many of its best officers to make good the shortage due to casualties and illness with the forces in the field. To form even an approximate estimate of the fighting value of the Territorial Force in the various stages of its progress from mobilisation and embodiment onward is very difficult. But it is doubtful whether, even at the end of six months, it could be reckoned the equal, mass for mass—not unit for unit, which is a very different thing—of anything like 100,000 continental troops. This does not on the face of it look a very powerful force to serve the double task of defending the United Kingdom from invasion and of providing a great reservoir of armed strength for our forces overseas.

During the forty years of its existence the present system has only once had to cope with anything approaching serious war. The war in South Africa was of immense significance in the inner history of the British Empire. But from the purely military point of view it was of the first importance only, because it so nearly proved too much for our military resources. Our military system in 1899 differed very little from what it is to-day. The total strength of the Regular Army was approximately the same,

namely, just over 240,000 of all ranks, including India. The Militia was a separate force larger in numbers by some 44,000 than the Special Reserve that has replaced it, somewhat inferior to it in training, but enjoying the advantage of being composed of units capable of being used as such for garrison or field purposes, and possessing a tradition and corporate spirit of its own. The Volunteers and Yeomanry were considerably below the strength they rose to during the war, and numbered some 240,000, individually a little less trained than the Territorial Force to-day, and collectively without anything resembling an organisation.

At the very outset of the war we were handicapped by the practical absence of any reserve of troops at home available for the reinforcement of our threatened frontiers, without a general mobilisation which would have precipitated war. This is an inherent defect of the Cardwell system. As it was, a few thousand men were taken from colonial garrisons here and there and 7000 borrowed from India. These were insufficient to prevent the situation being hopelessly compromised before the main Expeditionary Force of 47,000 men arrived. With that situation the Expeditionary Force was wholly unable to cope, and in a few months practically the whole of the Regular Army at home and in the Mediterranean had to be sent out. The place of the battalions in the Mediterranean was taken by the Militia, while thirty Militia battalions were dispatched to South Africa early in 1900 and relieved by another thirty battalions in 1901. Altogether, 256,370 Regulars and 45,566 Militia, including drafts, were sent to South Africa in the course of the war. But it required another 146,819 Volunteers, in improvised forces of all sorts and kinds, from the Mother Country, from the other Dominions and from South Africa, to carry the struggle to a successful issue.

Throughout the war we enjoyed the undisputed command

of the sea. Our adversaries never even had a single torpedo boat with which to harass our transports. Our fleet, then at more than three-Power strength, retained its absolute strategic freedom, and we were able to deplete England and weaken the Mediterranean garrisons and India without running any risk of hostile intervention. Our adversaries, from first to last, only numbered 90,000 men, and of that number not more than half were ever in the field at any one time. Remarkable as were the fighting qualities displayed by the Boers, they never made the slightest effort to follow up their successes, and we were given unlimited leisure to retrieve our failures and train our raw levies. Why should we ever get off so lightly again ?

The war has been followed by nearly a decade of patching and tinkering. A number of additional infantry battalions and batteries of artillery were added to the Regular Army during the war. A recruiting crisis followed. To meet this, and also in order to increase the strength of the Reserve, Lord Midleton introduced the system of optional three years' service, at the same time substantially raising the soldier's pay. The reform was sound in principle, and the high figure at which the Reserve stands to-day is the result. But it was introduced without any precautions being taken to make sure that the numbers extending would be sufficient for the supply of drafts to the oversea battalions, and a considerable shortage in this respect caused Mr. Arnold-Forster to reverse the arrangement a few years later. Mr. Arnold-Forster himself, deeply impressed by the strategical weakness of the Cardwellian system, endeavoured to substitute a new system based on a clear division between a permanently mobilised long-service army on the one hand—intended to provide not only the oversea garrisons but also a central reserve available for minor expeditions and for the quiet reinforcement of any point oversea without general mobilisation—and, on the other hand, a real short-service

army with fifteen months' service, which was to furnish an adequate Expeditionary Force on mobilisation. The principles underlying Mr. Arnold-Forster's scheme were absolutely sound, and whenever the task of organising our Army for war is seriously taken in hand they will have to be admitted. But there were defects in the actual working out of the scheme. It was too far-reaching not to encounter opposition among soldiers grown up in the tradition of the existing system and appreciative of its administrative convenience in peace. There was a general feeling of relief in the higher ranks of the Army when Mr. Haldane dropped the whole troublesome business of reforming the Cardwell system, and confined himself to minor changes calculated to make the best of things as they were. A divisional organisation, which is largely in actual existence, and is more convenient in the field, was substituted for an army corps organisation which chiefly existed on paper. Cardwell's original intention of making the Militia an integral and subordinate part of the Regular Army was carried out by converting it into the Special Reserve. The strength of the Regular Army was, for reasons of economy, reduced by over 30,000 men by the disbanding of units raised during or since the war. To all intents and purposes, the force available for war oversea is to-day what it was in 1899, only more scientifically organised.

But the most pressing need shown by the war was not the internal reform of the Regular Army, but the provision of some power of expansion outside it. 'No military system will be satisfactory which does not contain powers of expansion outside the limit of the Regular Forces of the Crown, whatever that limit may be'—that was the one practical conclusion arrived at by Lord Elgin's Commission. The only existing source from which such power of expansion could be drawn were the Auxiliary Forces. The Duke of Norfolk's Commission of Enquiry into the condition of

these forces found them unfit to face trained troops with any prospect of success. It recommended a variety of minor reforms, but found that it was impossible, from volunteers, to exact any standard of training incompatible with the conditions of open competition in their civil life—in other words, any standard adequate to secure real fighting efficiency. The Commission consequently declared that ‘a home defence army capable . . . of protecting this country from invasion can only be raised on the principle that it is the duty of every citizen . . . to be trained for the national defence.’ Mr. Haldane, accepting the minor recommendations of the Commission, decided to ignore its main conclusion and to rely on a better organisation of local patriotism to provide that ‘nation in arms’ the necessity of which he recognised, and the strength of which he was at one time prepared to fix as high as 900,000 men. The actual result of his anticipations has already been dealt with.

At the end of nearly ten years’ tinkering we stand very much where we did. Our military material is somewhat better organised and better trained. But in total quantity available either for home defence or for foreign service, and in initial quality, it is simply the same material that proved so lamentably insufficient to deal with two small farmer republics in 1899. We can now go on to consider how far this same material is sufficient for the task involved in a war with one or more of the world’s great naval and military powers. The wars that will be briefly reviewed in the next few pages are none of them necessarily imminent; but not one of them is more improbable than the South African War might have seemed within four or five years of its outbreak. Can we be certain beyond all shadow of doubt that not one of them will come about within the next ten years, and if not, can we afford to lose even a moment in putting our house in order?

Our position as a continental Empire can involve us in only two wars of the first magnitude—a war with Russia affecting our position in India and the Near East, and a war with the United States in defence of Canada. A war with Turkey, in defence of our position in Egypt, a war with Afghanistan, or an internal rising in India, would not in themselves be beyond the power of our present organisation, though any of them might prove a severe handicap in a wider struggle.

The problem involved in a conflict with Russia is not so much the actual defence of India against a direct Russian invasion, carried out from the present Russian frontier, as the prevention of an aggressive advance by Russia which would render our position in India impossible in the future. Afghanistan, and possibly Persia, would be the battleground. There would be no question of immediate encounter on a large scale, but the necessity of strengthening our position on the frontier, and possibly of taking up advanced positions in the debatable area, even before the outbreak of war, in order to decide or forestall the action of Afghans or Persians, indicates the same need, so keenly felt in the case of South Africa, for some means of reinforcement at the threatened point, independent of general mobilisation. Judging by the Manchurian campaign, in which Russia eventually had 1,000,000 men in the field at the end of five thousand miles of a single line of railway, there would be nothing to prevent her transporting an equally large force to the Afghan border, less than half as far away, and with two lines of railway to facilitate the movement. The real difficulty in the way of anything like a rapid movement in force beyond that point lies in the almost complete absence of local supplies, and the scarcity of forage and water for transport animals. Still, Lord Roberts and other competent critics have estimated that the Russian forces in the area of operation would be brought up to

500,000 men, or more, within the first year, and could be maintained at that figure, especially if strategic railways were pushed on in the rear of the invading forces.

What have we to put in the field against such a force ? Thanks to Lord Kitchener, the Indian Army can now put 150,000 men on the frontier on mobilisation, though that figure might easily be reduced by 50,000 if the Afridi tribesmen were inclined to give trouble on our line of communication, and by another 50,000 in case of internal disturbance in India itself. The addition of our present Expeditionary Force would bring the total forces in the field up to 250,000 or 300,000. For the first six months this might possibly prove sufficient. After that the supply of drafts would be exhausted, and the force would begin to dwindle, while the Russian strength grew to its maximum. Can we rely on volunteering from the Territorials, and from the defence forces of the Dominions, or on the improvisation of new native units in India, to find the other 200,000 to 300,000 men necessary to put us on an equality with our opponents, and then to supply drafts at the rate of some 200,000 men a year for the whole of our forces in the field ? And if we could find the men, could we find the officers to lead them ? The answers to these questions can only be in the negative. We may therefore reckon that, with our existing system, we could not expect to hold our own against the Russians for very much more than six months, and would then be compelled to fall back on India itself. Whether the Russians then contented themselves with making good their position in Afghanistan, or whether they considered the circumstances sufficiently favourable to warrant an immediate advance into India, in either event the whole fabric of our Indian Empire would be fatally undermined.

Equally serious, from the purely military point of view, is the problem involved in the defence of Canada against the United States.

Here we have a frontier of nearly four thousand miles which, except for the chain of the Great Lakes, presents not a single natural obstacle to invasion, while there is hardly a single important town in Canada, outside the Maritime Provinces, which is secure from a raid. What are the forces available on both sides? The Canadian Militia consists of some 50,000 men, on much the same level of efficiency as our Territorials, and of an untrained Reserve of 50,000. The total available Regular Army in the United States and the organised State Militias do not amount to much more than 150,000 men. If the Canadians could hold their own for three or four weeks, and we had a sufficiently effective command of the sea to make possible the immediate dispatch of the Expeditionary Force, we might for a time enjoy a decided superiority. But that superiority would not be sufficient to enable us to deliver a really crushing blow at any vital point, and compel the Americans to make peace. Failing that, the contest would inevitably become one of endurance. The Americans would call their whole manhood under arms, as they did in the Civil War, and in a few months could bring from one million to two million imperfectly trained, but by no means despicable, troops into the field. Even if we adopted the same policy, and, following Sir Ian Hamilton's suggestion, improvised a similar force by compulsion, we should never be in a position to match them in mere numbers. We should be crushed as surely in the end as the Southern Confederacy was; Canada would be forcibly annexed, and the keystone taken out of the arch of Empire. Our only chance of holding our own, and saving Canada, would be if we could start off with an Expeditionary Force capable of securing a really decisive initial advantage, and could follow it up with a steady stream of reinforcements, not, equal, perhaps, in mere numbers to the American levies, but sufficiently superior in training and direction to prevent

our opponents ever reversing the situation. But those two conditions are not satisfied by the existing system, which is even less adequate to the task of defending Canada than it is to safeguarding that of our position in India.

We come next to a class of military problems, no less vital, and undoubtedly more urgent, namely, those incidental to a great struggle for the maintenance of British sea-power. These include, on the one hand, operations conducted on the continent of Europe, whether to preserve the balance of power, or to strike home after a naval success, and, on the other hand, the defence of the United Kingdom against invasion. In this connection there is, for our generation at least, only one potential opponent in view. That opponent is Germany. The immense strides made by the German Navy in recent years, and the seriousness of the German challenge to our command of the sea, have already been referred to. But Germany is not only our greatest rival at sea. She is the most formidable military power in the world. She can put 1,700,000 men into the field, keeping over 2,000,000 more for local defence, for lines of communication, and for drafts. She has at her back Austria-Hungary and Italy, with field armies of 750,000 and 600,000, and correspondingly vast reserves for local defence and for replacing losses.

This tremendous engine of destruction is used by Germany for the furtherance of her interests and her ambitions, either through the normal medium of diplomacy or, if occasion should demand, by war. More than once in recent years she has gained her way by a mere movement of her hand to the sword-hilt. The danger which confronts us is the possibility that Germany, if she feels convinced that we stand in the way of her expansion, may decide to use her military power in order to compel her neighbours to conform to her policy, and provide her with the help neces-

sary to enable her to crush us at sea. The reduction of France to the position of a dependent ally, the practical incorporation of Holland and Belgium in the German Empire—these are the steps by which such a policy would be carried out. There is no other means of checking such a policy, if such a policy should be intended, than the capacity to support France with a military force which would enable her to resist the German pressure in peace, or repulse the German attack in war.

With Austria to cover her rear against any possible interference from Russia, Germany could, for the purposes of such a war, develop almost her whole strength against France. She would bring fully 1,600,000 men into the field at the very outset, against whom the French could at the most muster some 1,300,000, with a correspondingly smaller reserve in rear. The actual frontier between Germany and France has, it is true, been so strongly fortified by the French that they might hope to defend it successfully against largely superior numbers. But nothing can be more certain than that, in the event of war, Germany is not going to throw away her advantages by crowding her army into the 240 miles of actual Franco-German frontier, but will move directly through Belgium, possibly also through Switzerland, in order to give full play to her numbers and to her enveloping strategy. Given these general conditions, the question is, Can we supply France with a force strong enough to redress her numerical weakness and sustain the left flank of her defence? In other words, can we supply at least 300,000 men? And what in a continental war is no less material, can we put them in the field in Belgium within a fortnight of the declaration of war? We obviously can do nothing of the kind. The most our system ever professes to do is to find 170,000 men for oversea work. The largest force we actually could send in time to be of any service is less than 100,000. And for the purpose

which we are considering neither 100,000 men, nor even 170,000 men, are enough to decide the issue.

The conclusion remains that we are not in a position to help France to stand up against Germany with any prospect of success. And that means that we cannot reckon upon the support of France when the critical time arrives, and may even find France and the French Navy brought into line against us. There will be no sudden change of policy, perhaps, but one day France, at present still inclined to believe that we really mean to set our military house in order, may definitely make up her mind that we can be of no real use to her. From that moment her policy will begin to shape a new course, and the logical end of that course will be an understanding with Germany, followed by mutual diplomatic support, and maturing in armed co-operation.

We now come to the remaining problem, that of an invasion of these islands. This is the only strategical problem which Mr. Haldane and his coadjutors have discussed at all, and an examination of their conclusions, and of the arguments and assumptions on which they have been founded, affords some extraordinarily interesting examples of the process which Mr. Haldane has described as 'clear thinking.'

Mr. Haldane's conclusions are, firstly, that the Territorial Army, by itself, is capable of dealing with an invading force not exceeding 70,000 men, and, secondly, that no force of that size, or, indeed, anything like that size, could possibly elude our Navy and reach these shores in safety. This latter conclusion is based by Mr. Haldane and Sir Arthur Wilson on a series of most remarkable assumptions. It is assumed, to begin with, that we are at war with Germany alone, and that our Navy has no other problem to deal with. It is further assumed that our naval superiority over Germany in home waters must always be so great

that, even if half our fleet is decoyed away by a stratagem, the remaining half could make a certainty of crushing the whole German Navy. It is further assumed that at the time when the projected invasion is undertaken, the whole German Navy, including apparently even commerce destroyers, is shut up in its ports, and that it will only come out in order to act as a passive escort to the transports carrying the invading army. It is assumed that an immense fleet of transports will be necessary ; according to a magazine article by ' Master Mariner,' an anonymous expert whom Mr. Haldane has pressed into his service along with Sir Ian Hamilton and Sir Arthur Wilson, the Germans will require at least 200,000 tons of shipping, or three tons a man, to carry 70,000 men across the North Sea, and will be obliged to use at least 150 vessels, that is to say, vessels of an average tonnage of little more than 1300 tons, for the purpose ; many of these vessels, according to Sir Arthur Wilson, will not steam more than ten to twelve knots. It is assumed by ' Master Mariner ' that the whole operation of getting the men on board, crossing the North Sea, disembarking, and getting ready for an advance inland, would, given fair weather and no opposition afloat or ashore, take three weeks—about the time it took us to land troops at Cape Town ! Lastly, Sir Arthur Wilson assumes that the Germans will have neither destroyers, nor submarines, nor wireless telegraphy, while we shall have an unlimited supply of all these adjuncts of modern naval warfare.

Now let us make a few assumptions on our side. Let us begin by assuming a few of those contingencies which must be taken into account in any sane policy of Imperial defence. Let us assume, for instance, the contingency of an acute disagreement with Japan on the question of Japanese immigration into the Dominions, resulting in the denunciation of the alliance, and followed by a period of friction

and rivalry. Could we afford in that case to neglect the situation in the Pacific and expose Australia to the possibility of invasion? But if not, what becomes of the more than two-to-one superiority over the German Navy? Again, let us assume that Turkey, egged on by the Triple Alliance, should reassert by force her claims upon Egypt, or that serious trouble broke out in India at a time when our relations with Germany and her allies were seriously strained. The immediate dispatch of the Expeditionary Force would be imperative. Could we afford to disregard the possible action of the Austro-Hungarian and Italian navies, and not reinforce the Mediterranean squadron in order to safeguard the passage of our transports? And would not that seriously impair the more than two-to-one standard in the North Sea—especially if we consider, not what the naval position is to-day, but what it will be a few years hence? Are these contingencies impossible, or even improbable? And if not, and if the Germans do mean business, why should they not be allowed by Mr. Haldane to make or choose their opportunity? Why should they deliberately select the conditions least favourable to themselves?

Let us further assume that a few years hence we shall not, in any case, and apart from other complications, have that more than two-to-one superiority over the German Navy in home waters which Sir A. Wilson postulates—and all the indications, unfortunately, favour that assumption. Then take the case, admitted in his Memorandum, of a successful stratagem; for instance, a report that the whole German Navy has successfully got out and is heading northerly towards the Faroes. Could we afford to send north a bare half of our fleet to encounter it? If not, then, for a time at least, till the mistake had been discovered, we should be left with a fleet considerably smaller than the German, and the conditions would be not unfavourable for invasion.

Again, let us assume that the Germans do not accept for their Navy the passive rôle assigned to them by our Admiralty. Suppose they take the initiative and achieve, in greater or less degree, the success achieved by Japan in February 1904 ? Suppose that in the first serious encounter they should prove to be possessed of some formidable new tactical device not yet fully appreciated by our sailors ? Suppose our fleet so seriously crippled as to make it inadvisable to try conclusions again till our injured ships were repaired, or outlying squadrons concentrated to restore our superiority ? Suppose, in other words, that we have got only a very incomplete command of the sea, or are, even temporarily, in a position of decided naval inferiority. Would invasion in force be impossible then ? Napoleon needed no assured superiority at sea to invade Egypt. The Japanese did not wait for Tsushima before sending their army to Manchuria.¹ Not only would invasion in such a case be possible, but it would be certain. For with our present defencelessness on land the invader would have everything to gain by it. The capture of one or more of our naval bases might enable him to convert a mere temporary success at sea into permanent superiority. By the occupation of London and other centres of our national life he might hope to bring about the complete collapse of our Government and secure peace on his own terms. In other words, under our present system a comparatively slight check at sea may, and a serious defeat, even if only temporary, must spell irretrievable disaster.

Now let us deal with that immense, unwieldy fleet of

¹ This was in spite of assurances from the Russian Admiralty to the Russian military authorities as categorical as Sir A. Wilson's Memorandum itself. In answer to questions as to the possibility of the Japanese landing troops in Manchuria, the chief of the Naval Staff replied on October 10, 1903: 'So long as our fleet is not destroyed the operations named are absolutely impossible . . . our fleet cannot be beaten by the Japanese fleet, either in the Gulf of Korea or in the Yellow Sea.'

transports, the contemplation of which affords Mr. Haldane and his friends such consolation. The estimate of three tons a man would be unnecessarily high even for a force, complete in all arms, and dispatched on a long voyage across the ocean.¹ Half that allowance would be ample for the short passage across the North Sea ; and when we consider that the Army intended for the invasion of England would be as lightly equipped as possible, and would contain a much higher proportion than usual of infantry, and a much lower proportion of cavalry and artillery, in view of the enclosed nature of the country, we shall not be far out in assuming that even one ton a man will be quite sufficient for the purpose.

Again, why should the Germans be supposed to use ships of 1300 tons doing ten knots when they have plenty of ships of 13,000 tons and over, capable of doing eighteen and twenty knots ? To carry 70,000 men would require, not 150, nor yet 15, but 5 German liners. The new 50,000-ton *Hamburg-Amerika* liner, now on the slips at Stettin, will be able to take more than half the force herself. There are a dozen German ships that could between them carry an invading army of much nearer 200,000 than 70,000 men. A dozen, or even two dozen ships, starting from several different ports, and escorted by destroyers, are something very different from the fleet of small transports covering twenty miles of sea, with a whole battle-fleet in attendance, with which our vendors of soporifics would comfort us. With the magnificent detraining and berthing facilities of the great German ports, and the high speed of the vessels themselves, the period required for the whole operation of invasion, from the time that the soldiers step on board

¹ In the South African War 329,251 officers and men, together with the guns of artillery units, large quantities of stores, but only a few horses and wagons, were taken out in 117 transports totalling 718,837 tons, an average of a little over two tons a man. The Japanese used about one and a half tons a man for their Manchurian campaign.

to the time that they begin their advance on the other side, is much more likely to be three days than three weeks.

Meanwhile, what of our wireless telegraphy? What of our destroyers and submarines? As to the first, if our wireless telegraphy will enable our scouting vessels to report at once any ships in sight, their wireless telegraphy will enable them to know better the whereabouts both of our scouts and of our cruisers, and take care to avoid them. As for destroyers, Germany is almost as well off as ourselves, possibly even better off, if we take into account the much heavier task, namely that of patrolling the whole German coast-line, which we propose to assign to our destroyers. If we have submarines, so have they. If our submarines can torpedo their transports, might not their submarines succeed against our battleships, and alter the whole naval situation in an hour? In any case, the first thing the Germans would do to cover an invasion would be to attack our three submarine bases on the east coast. Failing that, they might try to decoy our submarines in the wrong direction. Again, if the transports were already in port, or close inshore in shallow water, their being torpedoed by submarines, even if it were possible, would not necessarily make any very serious difference to the landing.

There are other factors, too, introduced by modern science as well as submarines. The use of floating mines, of which the Germans showed themselves such stout advocates at The Hague, is apparently never contemplated by 'Master Mariner' or Sir Arthur Wilson. Yet the laying of mines round the transports, as a defence against submarines, or using them to block our submarine stations, or even Dover Straits, do not seem such impossible precautions. Last of all, there are the airship and the aeroplane, even now developed to a point at which they might be of considerable scouting service, and certain to be enormously improved in the next few years. Apart from

any possibility of the dropping of projectiles from above, an airship at a height of several thousand feet, and equipped with wireless apparatus, can gather and convey more information than a score of destroyers and cruisers. The submarine, invisible as it is from the deck of a ship, is as visible to an aeroplane scout flying overhead as the unwary herring playing near the surface is to the watchful cormorant. The aeroplane could follow and signal its every movement, and might, perchance, even essay to damage the delicate periscope on which the submarine depends for finding its way when submerged. Are we likely to be so much ahead of Germany in the use of aerial craft as to prevent her using them successfully in futherance of an invasion ?

Whatever the soporific school may say, the danger of invasion will, in certain by no means improbable contingencies, be a very real one. No one suggests that the invasion of England is likely to prove an easy task. It will, even under the most favourable circumstances, be a difficult and hazardous undertaking. But it is an undertaking in which the prize would justify almost any risk. Once in England, the invader would have the heart of the Empire at his mercy, with no obstacle between him and complete, overwhelming triumph except the Territorial Army.

What could that army do to stop him ? In an earlier passage we came to the conclusion that, even at the end of six months' embodiment, it would not collectively be the equal of 100,000 continental troops. It would certainly not be the equal of 70,000, or anything approaching 70,000, at the outset. But that is on the supposition that the whole force could be assembled to meet an invader. Now, the defence of two islands with an enormous coast-line inevitably necessitates not only garrisons for all naval bases and other important points, but a mobile local defence. Can Ireland, or Scotland, or the North of England, can any part, in fact, be left wholly unprotected ? With even the

most inadequate provision for these needs—and local political pressure would not let it be too inadequate—it would be impossible at any time to bring more than 100,000 Territorials, ‘stiffened’ by a few thousand odds and ends of Regulars, into the field against the invading army. It is no disparagement either of the patriotism or of the courage of our citizen force to say that 30,000 to 50,000 trained troops, according as invasion took place at the outset of war or after some months, would be able to defeat them. And defeat in their case would, according to Sir Ian Hamilton, mean complete disorganisation for the time being. The invader, too, might no doubt have to shed some troops at his base and along his line of advance. But an invading force of 70,000 to 100,000 men, playing for a great stake, ought to be able to bring fully three-quarters of its strength into action. And invasion on the scale even of 200,000 men presents, as we have seen, no insuperable difficulties.

What we maintain, then, is that the Territorial Force is wholly unequal to meeting an invasion of even only 70,000 men in the early stages of a war, and that invasion on that scale, and, indeed, on a far larger scale, is, under certain circumstances, perfectly possible. To provide adequately for local mobile troops and for garrisons, as well as to furnish a central field-force capable of crushing the invading army, we require a force of, at the very least, twice the numerical strength of the Territorials, at least as well trained, before war breaks out, as the Territorials would be after several months’ embodiment, and officered in the main by professional soldiers.

We are now in a position to consider the sum-total of our needs as illustrated by a consideration of the main strategical problems which confront us. We want, first of all, a two-Power standard of naval strength to keep the sea road of

the Empire clear for the passage of our military reinforcements and of our commercial shipping. An immense effort will be required to maintain that standard, and even that standard will not secure the maintenance, under all circumstances, of a two-to-one standard in home waters for defensive purposes. We want, for oversea purposes, first of all, a small permanently mobilised reserve, over and above the forces already quartered overseas in peace ; secondly, we want an Expeditionary Force capable of mobilising something not far off 300,000 men and maintaining them in the field ; thirdly, we want a power of expansion over and above the 300,000, which, in the case of India, might perhaps be estimated at 100,000, in the case of a continental war, or a war for the defence of Canada, at 500,000, or even more. Lastly, we want another 500,000 for home defence. The provision for home defence and that for expansion would to some extent overlap : the need for expansion would not reach its height till some time after the outbreak of even the most serious war, and during that time additional measures for home defence could be taken. Our total military requirement, then, may be summed up as the power to mobilise or embody a million men, of whom 300,000 should be immediately available oversea, and to keep this million up to strength in the course of a war.

These are no fanciful or extravagant figures. They represent what we should need in any one great world-war. They would not, indeed, by themselves cover the requirements of such a contingency as war with Germany and the United States, or war with a European coalition which included either France or Russia in the German system, or in which Japan and Turkey espoused the German cause. There is nothing in the present trend of international affairs at all incompatible with such possibilities ; but if we once really make ourselves an effective military Power we shall have no difficulty in finding allies of our own, and forestalling

all such coalitions by diplomatic means. It is our present weakness that invites the possibility of dangers against which no effort we could make would be sufficient, and against which no help would be forthcoming from any ally. A moderate, a reasonable effort to put our defences in order would diminish the dangers to be encountered, find us friends on whose support we could rely, and last, but by no means least, afford time for the development of new centres of defensive strength within our own Empire.

So much for our requirements. Now for the means at our disposal for meeting them. Our maintenance of the two-Power standard at sea is being slowly, but surely, whittled away. There is not a single one of the oversea campaigns discussed in the preceding pages with which our Expeditionary Force could cope, not even if we threw the whole Territorial Force in with it, and compelled it to go abroad. But even if the whole Territorial Force remained at home it would be utterly inadequate to defend the citadel of the Empire and the base of our fleets against an invasion on even a moderate scale. The result, when war comes upon us, can only be general paralysis. The plainest dictates of strategy and Imperial policy may demand the instant dispatch of our Regular soldiers and our fleets, inadequate though they may be, to avert disaster in some threatened portion of our Empire. But we shall not dare to use our Navy as it should be used, we shall not dare to send out of these islands that Expeditionary Force whose 'length of range' Mr. Haldane is so fond of dwelling upon. Our fatal weakness at home will not allow it. The British Empire will collapse like a house of cards, and the inevitable ruin of England will follow. It is the policy we pursue at present, the policy of shutting our eyes to the facts of the world around us, the policy of makebelieve, the policy of deceiving ourselves to avoid discomfort, and not the policy of strengthening our defences, whether at home or abroad, which, in

Sir Ian Hamilton's words, will 'paralyse our attack, sacrifice our initiative, and imperil all that we stand for in the world.'

How then can our needs be met? That the two-Power standard at sea must be effectively restored and maintained hardly needs argument. But that standard, though it will enable the Navy to fulfil its proper strategic task in the Empire, will not be enough to enable it in all contingencies to provide also a margin of surplus strength in home waters sufficient to make invasion impossible. That margin might, no doubt, be found, but at what cost? We have to remember that sea-power is not only actually becoming more costly every year, but that it is becoming relatively far more costly for us. Let us suppose that the extra margin, over and above the two-Power standard, should be reckoned as half the standard of the Power from which we contemplate the possibility of invasion. Thirty years ago that margin could have been provided against Germany at a cost of less than £1,000,000 a year, *i.e.* for far less than the cost of a large home-defence army, even if raised by the cheap method of National Service. To-day the same basis of half the German expenditure would mean an extra cost of £10,000,000, considerably more than even the War Office estimate of the extra cost of the National Service League's scheme. In a few years it would mean an extra cost of £15,000,000 and more. And having incurred that heavy additional burden we should be no nearer meeting the requirements of Imperial security oversea. It is the Imperial position as a whole, and not merely local defence, that we have to keep in view, even when it is our local defence arrangements that we are discussing. Military forces raised for the local defence of England may, in an emergency, serve equally well for the defence of Canada or India. Extra battleships cannot sail through the Khaibar or take the field in Belgium. The question is one of the best economy of our resources, and from that point of view,

whether it is home defence or Imperial defence that we are considering, we are forced to the conclusion that, whatever may have been the case in the past, the power to put a really large force of trained men into the field is indispensable to us to-day.

Can that force, or anything like it, be found under the existing system of voluntary service? Let us take first the Regular Army. Sir Ian Hamilton admits that to increase it beyond an extra division is, for recruiting reasons, practically impossible, except at the wholly disproportionate cost of a large increase of pay all round. Nor would even doubling or trebling the pay produce an army which, at the present strength, would be equal to twice its number of continental troops. The material out of which such a force might be created exists in the country without a doubt now, as it did in the days of Cressy and Agincourt. But in the absence of a military spirit in the nation, and a preliminary groundwork of national training, no mere money inducement will secure it. The little bands of English archers that scattered the feudal armies of France were paid, and well paid. But it was the national training in archery imposed by Edward I., and not the pay offered by Edward III. or Henry V. that made them what they were. Again, while the abandonment of the Cardwell system, and the clear separation of the permanently mobilised long-service force, from a short-service Expeditionary Force with a large reserve, would give us a system of greater strategical flexibility, and a somewhat greater total on mobilisation, the same recruiting difficulty would, under present conditions, inevitably recur the moment the attempt was made to mobilise more than say 200,000 men.

There remains the Territorial Force. After four years of unwearied effort on the part, not only of Mr. Haldane and the soldiers, but of hundreds of patriotic workers on the County Associations, the Force, which, after all, was not

a new creation, but a mere reorganisation of what already existed, is 45,000 below its establishment of 315,000. It is not growing, but contracting, at present only slowly, though most Territorial officers foresee a very rapid and serious depletion after next September, when some 100,000 men will be eligible to take their discharge. It may be possible to get a few more cyclist battalions or to encourage the zeal of Associations and commanding officers by a little judicious expenditure here and there on drill halls, ranges, or equipment. But there is no serious prospect of an increase even up to the present establishment of the Force. As for any substantial improvement in the training, the conditions of the voluntary system put it out of the question. It is not, as Mr. Haldane would have us believe, a question whether there are or are not in this country 315,000, or three times 315,000, young men who have in them the spirit of patriotism. The question is whether, under existing conditions, it is possible for the patriotic young men to give scope to their desire to become efficient citizen soldiers without suffering in their careers from the competition of those who are unpatriotic, or at least have never been wakened to a sufficiently active sense of public duty.¹ The whole issue of voluntary patriotism *versus* forced patriotism, which Mr. Haldane and Sir Ian Hamilton make, is a false one. The real alternatives are compulsory unpatriotism for the patriotic, or compulsory patriotism for the unpatriotic. Which do we prefer ?

Whatever our preference, it does not affect the conclusion to which our whole examination of the military and naval

¹ As it is, the great majority of Territorials and of their employers have never clearly realised what will happen on the outbreak of any serious war, when the Territorial Force will be embodied for six months. At a time when war contracts are in full swing, the firms who have encouraged volunteering will find themselves shorthanded, while less patriotic rivals will be coining money as fast as they can. It only wants one real war to finish the Territorial Force; the danger is that it will finish the British Empire as well.

situation has led us, namely, that there is no possible way of meeting the requirements of our defence, either at home or abroad, under the voluntary system. Nothing short of universal service will give us the strength we need, and the only question to consider is in what form the principle of universal service can be best adapted to our complex requirements.

The total number of men available under National Service is easily calculated. Taking the young men who reach a certain age, say eighteen or twenty, in any year, roughly half are available for military purposes. The balance includes those who are below the required physical standard, certain recognised exemptions, recruits for the Navy, and in our case possibly also merchant seamen and emigrants to other parts of the Empire. The total national strength is a multiple of that number, depending on the number of years for which the trained men are liable to serve, and, of course, subject to natural wastage. In Germany the liability to service is, theoretically, from eighteen to forty-five, in practice from twenty to thirty-nine. The annual contingent is some 275,000. The first seven annual classes form the first-line army; the next twelve classes form the Landwehr or Militia; the last class, and the men under twenty and over thirty-nine, together with the men rejected for physical defects, form the Landsturm, or Militia Reserve. In the United Kingdom the annual contingent, out of some 440,000 who reach the military age, would be about 200,000. On the German basis of twenty years' liability that would give us, allowing for wastage, considerably over three million trained men, of whom some 1,100,000 would be in the first line. In our own case we should, however, have to deduct the men enlisted in or transferred to the paid voluntary army, a proportion which would vary with the particular scheme of National Service adopted.

The schemes of National Service which have been advocated, or at least discussed, in this country, fall into two classes. On the one side are the schemes for a national army, on the German model, available for service anywhere, and taking the place not only of the Territorial Army but also to a great extent of the existing Expeditionary Force. On the other side are the schemes for a national militia, with a term of service ranging from a few weeks to six months, primarily available for home defence only, but calculated to provide, by volunteering of units or of individuals, a considerable reservoir of expansion for overseas purposes. The former type would undoubtedly give the greatest total of effective military power. It would enable us to mobilise an army comparable in size to that of France, and to use that army for any great national struggle in any field of operations. It would, on the other hand, be less well adapted for distant overseas wars of what might be called the second magnitude, such, for instance, as a serious Afghan trouble or a war with Turkey, or even for the initial stages of a slowly developing war, such as a war with Russia on the Indian frontier. These operations would want a considerable force to deal with them ; but to call out a section of the National Army for such a purpose would be inconvenient from many points of view, and very hard on the individuals selected. Again, any scheme of this character is open to the objection that it gives us more than we need, and that the demands it makes upon our people, even if the service is only for one year, are so heavy that it has no chance of being accepted. A National Militia scheme, on the other hand, is primarily only designed to liberate the Regular Army and Navy for their proper strategic work. But it would provide an unlimited reservoir of trained men who would in all human probability volunteer for overseas work in a great national struggle, and it could be made to fit in with and assist such a reorganisation of

the Regular Forces as would enable a greater Expeditionary Force to be mobilised. It would involve a far less drastic alteration of our ways of living, and be in every respect easier to carry out.

In their book Mr. Haldane and Sir Ian Hamilton have given a very peculiar variant of the first type. They have assumed a compulsorily enlisted army serving for two years, but limited to a peace establishment of 123,000. The scheme is, of course, an absurd one. It would mean taking about one man in seven of those who reach the military age and keeping him for two years, as well as making him liable for service for the rest of his military age, a proceeding so obviously unfair that its adoption is wholly out of the question. But leaving aside that aspect, and regarding simply the military result, we may conclude, on the German analogy, that such a force would mobilise to about 315,000 in the first line, and would have behind it subsequent annual classes, corresponding to the German Landwehr, amounting to another 400,000 to 500,000 available for drafts and for home defence. This would give us an Expeditionary Force twice as large as we have at present, and a reserve force as large, after deducting drafts for the Expeditionary Force, as our present Territorials, and, of course, very much more efficient.

It is scarcely credible, but Sir Ian Hamilton in criticising this scheme omits the whole of the later age-classes altogether, assumes that the whole result is to replace 315,000 Territorials by 315,000 'conscripts,' and deplors the 'wiping out' of our present Expeditionary Force of six divisions for the sake of a miserable saving of £6,000,000 ! In order to be practically in the same position as we are now, Sir Ian Hamilton declares that another 100,000 must be added to the peace establishment of the Compulsory Service Army, bringing the total cost to £1,500,000 above our present estimates. Now, on the German basis a peace

establishment of 100,000 means a first line on mobilisation of about 230,000, and a second line of 300,000 to 350,000 behind it. It would appear from the calculations given in an Appendix that the War Office arithmetician, duly followed by Sir Ian Hamilton, got his figure of 100,000 by comparing the German first line, not to the mobilised strength of our Expeditionary Force, but to our Expeditionary Force, plus the remaining Regular and Special Reserves—a most extraordinary blunder.

After this it is not surprising that Sir Ian Hamilton should consider a mobilisation strength of 545,000 in first line and 800,000 in second line—which is what a peace establishment of 223,000 on the German system would give us—barely equal to our present arrangements, and should contrast the ‘very considerable margin of enlisted men,’ i.e. the miscellaneous assortment of recruits, youths under twenty, and special reservists, left behind on mobilisation at present, with the absence of margin under conscription! For sheer muddle-headedness it would be hard to beat this joint effort of Mr. Haldane’s, Sir Ian Hamilton’s, and the anonymous War Office calculator’s, at working out the results of their own scheme of compulsory service.

For a reasonable scheme of National Service on the continental model we cannot do better than consider the one outlined by Professor Spenser Wilkinson in his work *Britain at Bay*. Starting on a basis of one year’s service, beginning at the age of twenty, for the infantry and field artillery, and two years for cavalry and horse artillery, he calculates that a peace establishment of some 220,000 would give, on the mobilisation of the first six age-classes, a first line force of nearly a million men, leaving a further half-million in the next four classes, and a corresponding further reserve if the liability were prolonged to the age of thirty-nine as in Germany. The existing Regular Army in the United Kingdom is eliminated in this scheme, drafts for the over-

sea units being enlisted at the end of their service with the National Army, while a certain portion of the latter are to be paid a retainer for accepting the liability to serve in minor expeditions. The total cost of this force he works out at just over £27,000,000, or over a million less than our present estimates. This estimate coincides almost exactly with the one framed in the War Office for a conscript force on the same peace footing, when we deduct £3,000,000 put down in the latter for wholly superfluous depots for training recruits for the oversea forces.

The shortness of the training given under Professor Spenser Wilkinson's scheme is no doubt a disadvantage, if his National Army is to be pitted against continental troops with two years' training. But good training and leading can do much, and at any rate the numbers provided by the scheme would be ample. The really weak spot of the scheme is its very inadequate provision for wars of the second and third magnitude, wars which, owing either to their relative unimportance, or to their long duration, or to unfavourable climatic conditions, would hardly justify the use of the National Army, and yet would want something larger as well as much better organised than the arrangement he contemplates for minor wars. In other words, his scheme, as it stands,¹ might do well for a campaign in Belgium or in Canada, but would hardly meet the case of Indian trouble, whether external or internal, or of war with Turkey or even Abyssinia.

Of the schemes on a Militia basis the best known and most carefully worked out is that of the National Service League. This scheme is primarily concerned only with creating a better Territorial Force than the one at present existing. The annual contingent, estimated at about

¹ There is nothing, however, to prevent such a scheme being coupled, at an increased cost, with some such reorganisation of our whole military system as is discussed in the following pages.

150,000,¹ after subtracting recruits for the Regular Army, Navy, and Marines, for emigrants and for merchant seamen, is to be trained for four months in the infantry (rather more in the other arms), and to be called up for a short annual repetition training during the next three years. The military age is to be from eighteen to thirty. This would give, after allowing for wastage, a total force of nearly 1,400,000.

Of these the National Service League scheme would apparently only directly organise the 400,000 comprised in the three classes doing repetition training. But there would be no insuperable difficulty, though a certain amount of extra expense, in providing for the mobilisation of three more classes, giving a total force of 750,000. The cost of the scheme, including a bounty of thirty shillings a year to 80,000 of the force to take the liability of the present Special Reserve, is estimated by the League at £8,600,000, or a net increase to the estimates of under £4,000,000, after deducting the cost of the existing Territorial Force and Special Reserve which would be abolished.²

¹ On 1901 census; the figures and the consequent financial estimate would now be somewhat higher.

² The War Office financial expert, whose impartiality Sir Ian Hamilton extols, insists that the gross cost will be nearly £13,000,000, instead of £8,600,000. But the calculations of this same expert, in Appendix VII. to *Compulsory Service*, indicate that, on the German system, a peace strength of 150,000 could be kept up all the year round for £13,000,000. The German system includes the cost of barracks, which the National Service League scheme does not; it also includes the calling up of reservists for repetition courses. The pay at sixpence a day for four months would be practically the same as the 2½d. of the German soldier for the year. Admitting that armaments and stores, administration, pay of officers and non-commissioned officers, would be the same for a four months' Militia as for a standing army, allowing for the shilling a day proposed for the men doing repetition courses, and for the Special Reserve retaining fee, which items would total altogether to just over £3,000,000, and halving the balance of £10,000,000, we would, on the War Office expert's own basis, get a cost for the whole force of £8,000,000, or rather less than the estimate of the National Service League. It is a pity the War Office expert did not take the trouble to compare his calculations in Appendix IV. with those of Appendix VII.!

Sir Ian Hamilton's criticism of the National Service League scheme is, firstly, that it is wholly defensive in its spirit, and, secondly, that the 'monstrous agglomeration of half-baked conscript Militiamen' which this sort of scheme provides would be quite useless against 70,000 continental regulars. Apparently a force of 400,000, all nineteen years and over, with a large proportion of regular officers, with four to six months' training in peace time, together with repetition courses, and with an unlimited reserve, is useless, even for home defence. But 267,000 Territorials, of whom not two-thirds manage even a fortnight's training, of whom a large proportion is under nineteen, with hardly any professional officers, and with no reserve outside Mr. Haldane's imagination, are not only sufficient to beat an invader, but are reckoned by Sir Ian Hamilton as also available *en bloc* for offensive purposes overseas! The real difficulty throughout the present controversy is to take either Mr. Haldane or Sir Ian Hamilton seriously.

What the National Service League's scheme would do is, first of all, to provide a force adequate for home defence, and so liberate the Regular Army and the Navy for their proper work. In the second place, it would provide a source of expansion. Judging from the experience of the South African War, and assuming that the embodied Territorial units would volunteer in the same proportion as the old Militia, while the proportion of volunteers from the unorganised reserve would be much the same as among Volunteers and ex-Volunteers in 1899, we might reckon this expansion as likely to amount to some 80,000 men in units, and another 60,000—70,000 in drafts or specially formed corps. In a great struggle for existence, especially if fought nearer home, say in Canada or Europe, possibly twice that number might be available. This would be an immense improvement on the present state of affairs;

but it would still fall short, by a good deal, of the full measure of our requirements for any one of the three great oversea campaigns which we have already discussed. Imperial security requires not only an adequate home defence, in order to liberate our oversea force, but it wants this latter force to be, from the outset of a campaign, something like twice the strength of our present Expeditionary Force.

The difficulty is not insurmountable, provided the reorganisation of the Regular Army is taken in hand at the same time as the creation of the National Militia force. It has already been suggested, on a previous page, that the reorganisation of our Regular Army on strategically sound lines would involve, as Mr. Arnold-Forster realised, a division between two clearly separated forces. On the one side, we require a permanently mobilised true long-service army, in the main distributed among the oversea garrisons in peace, but in part also retained as a central reserve available for immediate dispatch, without mobilisation, either to conduct a minor expedition or to reinforce a threatened frontier ; on the other, we need a true voluntary short-service army, with a large reserve capable of providing, on mobilisation, an Expeditionary Force sufficient for our initial requirements in a great war. The difficulty, under voluntary service, is that the number of recruits required for this short-service force would not be forthcoming. This difficulty is diminished enormously by the introduction of the principle of National Service, even if only for home defence. When the question for the individual is no longer merely one between serving and not serving, but between having to serve for four or six months without pay, or at the very outside for a gratuity of sixpence a day, and serving a year for a shilling a day with reserve pay to follow, the whole situation is altered. While service would only be compulsory for unpaid home defence, yet the exist-

ence of that compulsion would be a most effective inducement to enlistment in the paid regular service.

A scheme for a complete reorganisation of our forces, based on a foundation of obligatory Militia service for home defence, might work out somewhat as follows¹: Keeping approximately the same total on the regular peace establishment, viz. slightly over 240,000, but dividing differently, we might maintain somewhat over 150,000 permanently mobilised and on a long-service basis—namely, the present Indian and Colonial garrisons, and a reserve striking force of about 40,000—and another 90,000 on a short-service basis. The long service should be a true long service; that is to say, it should afford a complete career. Facilities for transfer to a reserve, or to positions as non-commissioned officers and instructors in the short-service force and the National Militia, or to civil appointments, should be freely given, but failing these the soldier should be allowed to serve on for twenty-one years and earn his pension. There would be a small reserve available to furnish a portion of the drafts required by the long-service units in war; the rest would be furnished by the reserve of the short-service force and by Special Reservists from the Territorial Force.

There would be no depots for the long-service units, but their annual requirement for drafts, amounting to from 12,000 to 15,000, would be met by enlistment from those who had completed their term either in the short-service force or in the Territorial Force, mainly, no doubt, from the former.

¹ While agreeing entirely with the writer that the introduction of National Service will involve, and also facilitate, a radical reorganisation of our Regular Army calculated to adapt it more closely to our strategical needs, I could not, of course, commit myself, still less the National Service League, to all the details of a proposal such as that here outlined without much closer examination. The general principal of a division into two clearly separated categories of Regular troops, one short service and the other long service, was advocated in an article which I contributed to *The Nineteenth Century* thirty years ago.—ROBERTS.

The short-service army should be on a real short-service basis, a year for the infantry and eighteen months to two years for the other arms. This, on a peace establishment of 90,000, would mean an intake of some 70,000 recruits a year—a figure which only the indirect pressure of compulsion for home defence would make possible. Allowing for some 10,000 transferred to the long-service force, there would be about 60,000 passed into the Reserve every year. On a twelve-years' basis that would give, allowing for wastage, a total Reserve of about 500,000, and make possible the mobilisation of a field force of some 270,000 with an adequate surplus for drafting purposes. The service would be short, but the co-existence of a compulsory system would make it possible to take in all the recruits at the same time—a very considerable advantage from the point of view of efficient training—while repetition courses of, say, a month a year for two years, and a fortnight a year in two subsequent years, would add greatly to the value of the Reserve.

Behind the short-service Regular Army would come the Territorial Force, or National Militia, organised on the lines laid down by the National Service League, but on a somewhat smaller establishment, owing to the transfer of another 35,000 from the annual contingent to the short-service force. It would have to call on four classes instead of three in order to mobilise a strength of 400,000, and its total output would be 1,000,000 men instead of 1,400,000.

Such a scheme would provide a military organisation closely adapted to our complex requirements. It would give us a first line in the shape of a long-service army of the very highest efficiency, permanently mobilised, and ready to take road, rail, or steamer for anywhere at a moment's notice. That long-service force would be distributed as between India, England, and the Colonial stations, on no rigid system of linking, but simply in accordance with the strategic situation for the time being.

With this force we could reinforce a threatened frontier, temporarily or permanently, or carry on an expeditionary war of moderate dimensions for a long time without interfering either with our social and industrial system or with the training of the short-service force maintained for wars of the first magnitude. This latter force would, together with the available portion of the long-service army, give us a mobilisation strength equal to our estimated requirement of 300,000 men immediately available for oversea purposes in any great war. Behind this force the National Militia would provide 1,000,000 trained men both for home defence and for voluntary expansion in a great struggle oversea.

From the recruiting point of view, too, such a scheme would be thoroughly sound. The existence of obligatory National Service, though confined to home defence, would both furnish the recruits for the short-service force and provide an inducement to enlistment in the long-service force in the shape of subsequent employment on the permanent staff of the two other forces. The main defect of the Cardwell system is that, while it offers no career and no pension, it keeps the soldier long enough to make it difficult for him to find another career. Under the scheme here outlined he could either choose a complete military career or else return to civil life only eight months later than his contemporaries who have preferred the Territorial Force, and with the advantage of enjoying reserve-pay.

As for the cost of such a scheme, there would be no increase in the ordinary peace establishment of the Regular Army. But there would be a considerable increase in the payment to the Reserve, in the provision for repetition courses, and for extra officers to complete on mobilisation.¹

¹ It might be possible to provide the large necessary reserve of officers required, both for the National Militia and for the Regular Army, by attaching a certain number as supernumeraries every year to the short-service force and calling them out for repetition courses.

The reserve-pay for the short-service force, which would not carry any practical liability for service in minor campaigns, but only for a great national war, might well be considerably less than the present pay of the first-class Reserve, and the total cost under this heading, including repetition courses, should not exceed £4,500,000, or about £3,000,000 more than the existing cost of the Army Reserve. Against this would have to be set a saving of some £2,000,000 on the Territorial Force due to the reduction in numbers, leaving a total increase, on balance, of £1,000,000 above the scheme of the National Service League in its original form, and £5,000,000 or £6,000,000¹ above our present Army Estimates. That is a substantial addition, no doubt ; but it is a small matter when compared with the risk of national disaster.

Having established the necessity of some form of National Service, and having considered the ways in which it can be most effectively adapted to our complex requirements, we can now proceed to consider briefly some of the objections which compose the greater part of the case made out by Sir Ian Hamilton and Mr. Haldane.

The first objection is that an army based on obligatory service cannot conduct war far from home or for any length of time, that 'its tendency is in the direction of the merely defensive,' that it leads to a continual sacrifice of Imperial ambitions on the altar of home defence. In support of this theory Sir Ian Hamilton asserts that 'the moment Rome began to expand imperially' she was forced to abandon her national system for a professional one ; that in the Manchurian War the Russian reservists did not fight as well as the Siberian reservists, because they had lost

¹ £9,000,000, according to the War Office expert's calculations in Appendix IV. to *Compulsory Service* ; about £4,400,000, according to the same expert's calculations in Appendix VII.

the sustaining power of the national idea in a land where there were no churches ; that the Japanese, on the other hand, were secretly getting tired of the war after Mukden ; that the Spaniards failed in Cuba, and the Italians in Abyssinia ; that the Germans sent volunteers, and not a conscript detachment, to Peking in 1900 ; and, lastly, that our Regulars plodded on patiently in South Africa, while the irregular volunteer corps showed their anxiety to get home much sooner. ' No instance can be drawn from history of the successful employment, for such purposes (*i.e.* distant war), of men compelled to serve against their will.'

Let us see. The Romans conquered Sicily, Spain, Northern Africa, Macedonia, and Greece with conscript legions. The mercenary system was not begun till the days of Marius, and it contained in itself the seeds of Rome's eventual downfall. The Swedes fought campaign after campaign in Germany, in the Thirty Years' War, with conscripts. Napoleon's conscripts fought at Jena and Austerlitz, at Borodino and the Pyramids, at distances far greater than any part of our Empire to-day is.

But to come down to our own times. Sir Ian Hamilton may be right in saying that the Elder Statesmen of Japan were far too wise to listen to the hot-heads who spoke of marching to Harbin. But was it really mere war-weariness and dislike of advancing further from home in the ranks of their own army that moved them ? Was it not rather the fact that the steadily increasing strength and efficiency of the Russian forces—conscripts also, and fighting five thousand miles from their homes—ruled out the hope of any further striking successes ? Sir Ian Hamilton entirely ignores the fact that for the only purposes for which we should send a citizen army oversea, it would be encountering a similar force subject to the same influences. Why should our men get war-weary in Belgium sooner than the Germans,

in Afghanistan sooner than the Russians, in Canada sooner than the Americans? Even if professional soldiers can go on longer than citizen soldiers, what is the use if they are beaten at the outset? Suppose that the Japanese had relied on a professional army. Their narrow budget, even allowing for lower pay and cost of maintenance, would not have provided for a larger Expeditionary Force than ours. Would that force have been enough to win Liao-Yang, let alone Mukden? Could it at the outset have spared the force required to take Port Arthur, and so make good the command of the sea? Or suppose that the Russians had only had voluntary service to rely on. Could they have put up the fight they did? Could they have held on to Harbin and Vladivostok, and secured such comparatively favourable terms of peace?

If the Spaniards failed in Cuba, it was not till after they had put some 180,000 men in the field. Would they have been more likely to succeed with 30,000 men under a professional system? Italy's trouble in Abyssinia was not the impossibility of using conscripts for Imperial defence, but the unpopularity resulting from the massacre of a citizen force, not in a great national struggle, but in an aggressive expedition, promoted by an ambitious attempt at colonial expansion on the part of the Government, with no real backing of national sentiment behind it. It is to avoid the unfairness and unpopularity of using the 'armed nation' for other than great national objects, that the Germans quite wisely decided to call for volunteers rather than to order off a small section of their citizen soldiers to China in 1900. That is why we shall always have to maintain a considerable force of professional soldiers, whatever form of citizen service we may introduce. But that is no argument against the use of citizen soldiers at a distance if the occasion is serious enough to warrant it.

Now let us come to the South African War. Sir Ian Hamilton contrasts the endurance of the Regulars with the impatience of the volunteer corps to get home at the end of a year. But what on earth does that prove against compulsion? The argument, if anything, is all the other way. The Regular is, to begin with, enlisted compulsorily, according to Sir Ian, by the pressure of hunger and unemployment. And whatever the original cause of the first enlistment, the reservists in South Africa, who composed half the force, were exactly in the same position as continental reservists, citizens called away from their work by order of the State. They knew they were under a legal obligation, and did their duty without worrying further about their return. The irregular corps only took on a temporary obligation, and when the time for its termination arrived, began to fidget if they were not speedily released. Does anybody dream that if we had had in 1899 a citizen army capable of being sent abroad, the nation would not have insisted on its being sent to South Africa the moment the seriousness of the struggle was realised? Sir Ian, in an amazing passage, says: 'Who is to guarantee that the parents of the men would let them go, or that, if they did so, they would fight?' Is there any one who, looking back to the dark days of December 1899, and to the immense wave of helpless, incoherent patriotism striving for the outlet so inadequately provided by the improvisation of extempore forces, can have a doubt what the citizen soldiers of England and their parents would have done then had a system of National Service existed?

Not the least astonishing thing in an astonishing book is, in fact, Sir Ian Hamilton's complete ignoring of the real strength and real meaning of Imperial sentiment. Because Russian peasants fought without much enthusiasm in a part of the world they had never heard of, for a policy they did not understand, and for an autocracy many of

them detested, are we to be told that Englishmen would refuse to fight for Canada, the mainstay of the whole Imperial fabric in the future, for India, imperishably associated with our glory as soldiers and as rulers, or even for Egypt, bound up with the names of Nelson and Abercromby in the past, and with those of Gordon, Cromer, and Kitchener in our own generation? What was it but that selfsame sentiment—the agony of fear at the possibility of Imperial disaster, the burning indignation at the thought of a victorious invader on British soil, even though that soil was six thousand miles away over the sea—which sent men in thousands flocking to the recruiting offices, and made thousands more hang their heads in shame and ‘hold their manhood cheap,’ because they had never been fitted by training to be of use to their country in the hour of danger?

So much for Sir Ian Hamilton’s arguments against the use of a citizen force overseas. Having shown what they amount to, we may incidentally note that if they were as valid as they are illogical they would still have no bearing whatever on the proposals of the National Service League, whether in their original form or with the modifications suggested in this work, as those proposals do not contemplate compulsory service overseas, but only look to securing a greater effectiveness and expansion of our offensive power, naval and military, by citizen service for home defence.

We can now proceed to deal with the objection brought from the Adjutant-General’s point of view, namely, that compulsory service will kill recruiting for our voluntary overseas Army, and make its maintenance impossible in peace. This is Sir Ian Hamilton’s inference from the following facts. The small German force in South-West Africa is better paid than our Regular Army. The Russians have had considerable difficulty in getting a class of professional non-commissioned officers. The French Colonial

Army and Foreign Legion have posts in the Government service reserved to them when they leave the colours, in spite of which Sir Ian thinks he has discovered traces of a tendency toward unpopularity in the colonial service. Lastly, there is the 'one narrow beam from the searchlight of experience,' which he finds in the inadequate response to Lord Midleton's scheme of a three-years' service with optional extension to eight years.

Let us see. The Germans apparently pay £50 a year to a private volunteering from their home army for a peculiarly arduous and uncomfortable service. We pay very little over half that sum; but then we give that for an all-round service, two or three years of which are spent in England, and the rest at stations the great majority of which are equipped with every sort of provision for the soldier's amusement and comfort. We give it to 'hungry hobbledehos,' 'weedy youths of seventeen and eighteen,' unfit for any other job, and costing in pay and keep the best part of £100 a head before they are matured and trained soldiers. What the Germans get is trained men over twenty, and they pay them, not for ordinary regimental work, but for work corresponding more nearly to the work done just across the border by the Cape Mounted Rifles or British South African Police at rates of five shillings a day and upwards. It would pay us handsomely to give the German rate of pay if we could recruit the same material as the Germans get. Our Home Establishment would then be a real Army, and not, as it largely is to-day, a *crèche* for the feeding up and maturing of 'hungry hobbledehos,' and we could knock fully 30,000 or 40,000 men off the establishment without taking one iota from its mobilising and fighting strength. As a result of National Service, indeed, we may not unreasonably aspire to some such result even without doubling the pay. We shall never get it under the present system. When we further consider that the Germans have no estab-

lished recruiting system, including such feeders as the Special Reserve, and that German industrial conditions do not, whatever may be the cause, create the 'hungry hobbledehoy,' fourteen shillings a week class to anything like the same extent as ours, it would not appear that the German instance carries us very far !

What of the movement 'towards unpopularity' of the French voluntary system ? The evidence on which Sir Ian Hamilton founds his assumption is based on 'a certain condescension' with which French officers and men of other units speak of them. A French officer attending British manoeuvres might find the same condescension on the part of every arm of our service, and every unit in that arm towards other arms and other units. He might even notice it on the part of Regulars towards Territorials ! But would it not be a little hasty if he inferred from this that either the British Army as a whole, or even the Territorial Force, were 'moving towards unpopularity,' and then proceeded, from this hypothesis, to draw sweeping deductions as to what might or might not be done in France ?

That the French voluntary soldier enjoys, over and above a rate of pay substantially the same as ours, certain openings for employment which Sir Ian Hamilton assumes as worth fourpence a day added to his pay, is true enough. If that provision really does secure the mature men France gets for her colonial army, and saves the expense of nursing up 'hobbledehoys,' we might do well to imitate her example.

As to the Russian difficulty about non-commissioned officers, whatever its cause, it seems, on Sir Ian Hamilton's own showing, to be on the fair road towards solution, and we can leave it at that. But there is another foreign instance, which Sir Ian Hamilton has forgotten, of which it might be well to remind him, as it really does bear on the point at issue. The United States have a professional Regular Army of 86,000 men, considerably smaller in pro-

portion to population than the professional colonial army of France. The pay is double the British or French standard. The soldiers' comforts are well looked after in every way. Discipline is not too rigorous. Only a fifth of the army is stationed abroad. There is no conscript army in existence to kill recruiting. Yet, strange to say, the Americans find no little difficulty in keeping their ranks filled, and the men they do get are to a very large extent not native-born Americans, but foreigners, in many cases men who have been through the mill of European conscription, and are consequently—in spite of all Sir Ian Hamilton's ingenious disquisitions—more inclined towards a professional military career than the unmilitary citizens of the Republic. Nor is there any evidence, after more than a century of voluntary service, interrupted only by the Civil War, of any 'movement towards popularity' on the part of the American Army.

Sir Ian Hamilton's argument from foreign countries, for all its parade of special information, is really too flimsy to stand examination. But let us consider our own experience, and, first of all, let us take the case of Lord Midleton's three-years' system. Experience showed that, after two or three years' service, our infantrymen were not prepared to sign on for longer service in the necessary proportion of 71 per cent. of the total. Therefore, says Sir Ian Hamilton, if you have a conscript army you will not get enough men to sign on from that for your professional army. But he himself admits that our men did sign on to the extent of 40 per cent. On that basis, a National Army on the lines advocated by Professor Spenser Wilkinson would furnish our oversea units with drafts to the tune of 80,000 a year! But, as the drafting requirements are only a little over 20,000, and would be reduced by the introduction of true long service to from 12,000 to 15,000, the percentage required would be only from 7 to 10 per cent. As far as it

goes, the 'searchlight of experience' afforded by Lord Midleton's experiment would indicate that, even with service on the continental model, we should have no difficulty about drafts for the oversea force.

In any case, the arguments developed by Sir Ian Hamilton, which have been dealt with so far, have no bearing whatever on National Service on a Militia basis, as proposed by the National Service League. But here he has another argument. With a recollection, perhaps, of Mr. Haldane's capitulation to the Labour Party on the subject of cadet training, he declares that public opinion will insist that the National Militia shall be trained in winter. Consequently, just at the age and time when the 'hungry hobble-dehoy,' 'inspired by the spirit of self-confidence, expansion, and Imperialism,' usually takes refuge out of the cold with the recruiting-sergeant, he will be offered the equally pleasant alternative of a few months board and lodging in the National Militia, and the Regular Army will 'shrivel up from the roots.' To this pretty theory we need only reply that the National Militia will not be trained in the winter. Even the compliant Mr. Haldane has left the training of his Territorial Force to the season best suited for military training and not for relief works, and any Government that has the courage to introduce National Service will not fall short of his standard of resistance to pressure. In so far as there is anything at all in the argument about winter, it is a point in favour of recruiting. The youth who has just done his summer's training, and has winter before him with no immediate prospect of work, will listen to the recruiter even more readily than the youth who has never handled a rifle, and will be worth a good deal more to the Army.

The whole edifice of theorising on this supposed killing of the Regular Army, built up by Mr. Haldane and Sir Ian Hamilton, is, contrary to the ordinary law of human

nature that men enjoy practising any skill which they have once acquired, however they may have acquired it, and to the undoubted fact that Governments can, by legislation, affect the aptitudes and tastes of a nation. Has compulsory education in England or Germany diminished the supply of clerks and professional men? Are not all thoughtful educationists in favour of introducing a more practical mechanical or agricultural training into our compulsory educational system in order to stimulate the desire of the growing generation to become skilled artisans and agriculturists instead of unskilled workers or clerks? Has compulsory football in our public schools discouraged athletics among our young men? Military education is no exception to the rule. What are the best sources of recruiting for the Army to-day? The Special Reserve, which contributes over 40 per cent. of its numbers, as did the Militia before it, the Territorial Force, which contributes some 7000 recruits a year, and military schools, like the Duke of York's School and the Gordon Boys' Home. The case of the *Spectator* Company, quoted by Lord Roberts, is equally in point, as is also that of the compulsorily enrolled Militia who enlisted for the Peninsular War, which he quotes from Mr. Fortescue. An instance from our history which is even more suggestive is that of the compulsory training in archery introduced by Edward I. Will any sane person argue that the paid volunteer archers who fought at Cressy and Agincourt were fewer in numbers or inferior in skill because of that compulsory training? Yet that is precisely the line Mr. Haldane and Sir Ian Hamilton are taking when they tell us that universal military training will discourage professional soldiering.

The fact is, that the one thing which can improve recruiting for our Regular Army, which can substitute trained adult men for 'hungry hobbledehoys,' and so give us an establishment composed entirely of fighting units, and with

a real strength corresponding to its paper strength, the one thing which can bring into its ranks a wholly new class of intelligence and technical aptitude, is a groundwork of national service. On that groundwork, and on that groundwork alone, might be built up some day an 'Army of a Dream,' such as Mr. Kipling once wrote of, a flower of mobile military force which imagination can foresee crumpling up the vast conscript armies of Europe, as the Black Prince's archers in their day crumpled up the multitudinous levies of feudal France.

Sir Ian Hamilton declares that our voluntary service is based on the principle of specialisation; but the efficiency of that principle depends largely on continuity and steadiness of demand. A farmer does not set aside a special labourer for hay-making, and keep him practising for that special business for the rest of the year. A captain does not set aside a gang of men to specialise on working the pumps in case of a serious leak. All hands are called out for the emergency in either case, and all hands are supposed to know how to do that particular work. And to a large extent this is true of war also. Modern war, that is to say serious war, occurs at intervals of a generation or more, but then it calls for an immense effort, for the relegating of everything else in a nation's life to the supreme business of fighting. The most effective way of coping with such a crisis is not specialisation of the few, but the best available training of the largest number, coupled with a high degree of specialisation on the part of the leaders. But where partial specialisation is rendered necessary, as, for instance, by the need for oversea garrisons and the frequency of small wars, then the efficiency of the specialised force will depend no little on the general diffusion of military aptitude in the nation at large. A highly specialised professional army will only flourish if rooted in the soil of a military nation.

Mr. Haldane has an objection of his own to any form

of National Service, and that is that it will be impossible to get officers enough, seeing that the Regular Army already suffers from a serious shortage. He does not attempt to explain why that which is possible in every other country should be impossible here. If he made the attempt he might, perhaps, realise that a national system creates its own class of officers. A nation trained to arms will naturally include a much larger proportion of its professional and leisured classes who will take up the military career. And, again, just as the existence of compulsory unpaid service will stimulate enlistment into the paid professional force, so the thought of compulsory service in the ranks will stimulate the youth of brains and ambition to qualify, at any rate for the reserve of officers, a decision which will often lead on to the further step of becoming an officer for good. The shortage of officers in our Army, and the absence of any adequate reserve, are bound to prove a terrible handicap to our Expeditionary Force in a great war, and to make effective expansion from sources outside the Regular Army almost impossible. Here, again, the key to the problem of the professional army is the trained and organised nation behind it.

This practically exhausts the argumentative case against National Service presented by Mr. Haldane and Sir Ian Hamilton ; but there remains a good deal of general vague insinuation and denunciation which deserves to be dealt with briefly. There is, throughout the work, a studied depreciation of the 'conscript' as an inferior being reluctantly dragged to war, and, at the best, only ready to fight where his own immediate hearth and home seem to him in danger. In so far as the criticism applies to the physical and intellectual qualities of nations in arms, it is freely and effectively confuted by Sir Ian Hamilton himself when he contrasts the 'fifteen shilling a week hobbled-hoy' with the skilled man who composes the rank and file of the

Territorial Force, and no less so of any national army. Does it, then, apply to their moral value? The heroes of Marathon and Thermopylæ were 'conscripts'; so were those Roman legionaries at Heraclea, of whom their conqueror, Pyrrhus, said: 'If these were my soldiers, or if I were their general, we should conquer the world'; 'conscripts,' too, were the victors of Jena and Sedan, as well as the men who fought at Plevna, or those who filled the trenches before Port Arthur with their dead. Yet, throughout, Sir Ian Hamilton assumes that compulsory or universal service means unwilling service, and professional, optional service a joyous eagerness for battle. Can there be any insinuation more unwarranted and more unjust than that the citizens of a community that governs itself, or is content with its national form of government, will not obey cheerfully the laws to which they themselves have assented, and fight bravely on behalf of a cause which is dear to them?

The only really compulsory system in Europe is ours, where 80 per cent. of the men who serve do so, according to Sir Ian Hamilton, under the pressure of unemployment and sheer hunger, and where the great mass of patriotic citizens cannot train themselves properly for the defence of their country in the absence of legislation to safeguard them against being the losers in their private affairs as a result of their patriotism. The whole contrast between voluntary and compulsory patriotism, continually emphasised or implied by Sir Ian Hamilton, is a false one. The true contrast is between organised patriotism and unorganised patriotism. In the former case a small minority of the unpatriotic or cowardly are compelled to serve along with the great body of brave and patriotic citizen soldiers. In the latter case the vast majority of the patriotic are prevented from fulfilling what is their duty and their desire, while a minority, impelled not so much by patriotism or even 'sheer love' of fighting, as by destitution, are sacri-

ficed on their behalf—and, it is more than likely, sacrificed in vain.

Of the effect of National Service upon the individual, Sir Ian Hamilton is prepared to admit something that is favourable: chests are broadened, backs straightened, cleanliness, obedience, punctuality are fostered; but individual initiative, he asserts, is weakened, the interplay of varying ideals is sacrificed, and the land is filled with sealed-pattern citizens turned out by the hundred thousand. He is here speaking of Germany, and would have us believe that military service robs the German of his native initiative and originality, and that National Service in England would have the same result. That the German lacks initiative, as compared with the Englishman, is true; but he lacked it before the days of Scharnhorst, and the blame for it cannot be thrown on a system of training which has always laid great stress on the initiative of the individual—far more, indeed, than the training of our own Army. There is no reason in the world why National Service in this country, if intelligently applied, should not develop initiative, self-reliance, and originality, as well as improve the national physique and foster much-needed habits of discipline. It cannot be said that any of these various qualities—physical, moral, and intellectual—are fostered by our modern industrial conditions. It is as a corrective to those conditions that National Service would be worth having, even if there were no prospect of the citizen army ever firing a shot. Sir Ian Hamilton himself admits the value of military training in making the old soldier, whatever his antecedents or his subsequent career, ‘a preservative, not a disintegrating, element in the population.’ Surely we have room in our national life for an institution which shall be the citizen’s university—an institution in which our young men shall, to use Milton’s description of the ideal school, ‘be stirred up with high hopes of living to be brave

men and worthy patriots, dear to God ; where they shall have an abundance of exercises which shall keep them healthy, nimble, strong, and well in breath ; which, being tempered with precepts of true fortitude and patience, will turn into a national valour, and make them hate the cowardice of doing wrong.'

As to the general effect of citizen service upon national policy, Sir Ian Hamilton lays down a theory which will hardly commend itself to those lovers of peace who are also advocates of the existing system. He contends that the voluntary system encourages Imperial expansion and a light-hearted attitude towards war, based on the 'valour of ignorance,' while National Service is defensive, unaggressive, and 'anti-Imperialist.' There is an element of truth in this which is worth disentangling. National Service does certainly imply a much more responsible attitude towards war. The voter who is also a soldier, or father of soldiers, will not, as a rule, favour war on frivolous or inadequate grounds. The soldier or ex-soldier who is a voter will expect an intelligent attitude towards military affairs from the politicians who solicit his support, and does not encourage, or approve of, the 'valour of ignorance' in his rulers, when that ignorance may involve the loss of his own life. He expects that if he is to risk his life, it will be for a good cause and with every reasonable preparation to ensure success. 'Humble because of knowledge, mighty by sacrifice'—that is the ideal of the nation in arms. But this has nothing to do with the question of a defensive attitude in strategy or with Imperialism. Given a national objective that is worth it—the establishment of a great political ideal like German unity, the securing of an economic opening essential to the national development, such as the Korean and Manchurian market was to Japan—and the armed nation will attack as unhesitatingly as the nation which relies on a professional army. As for Imperialism,

it has nothing to do with aggression. It is a conception of all the British Dominions as one great united community, a State with a real life of its own, and not a mere fortuitous and temporary conglomeration of scattered territories. If the citizens of the United Kingdom, or of any other part of the Empire, are imbued with this conception, then National Service will be used for Imperial purposes, and the citizen force will be employed as readily to defend the unity and integrity of the Empire as to preserve the inviolability of the home territory. If not, then neither a citizen army nor a professional army will be used for other than local objects. That many of the most ardent Imperialists are zealous advocates of National Service for home defence is not a mere inconsistency, as Sir Ian Hamilton suggests, but the reasoned conclusion of a study of the problem of war from the Imperial as well as from the local point of view.

But universal service has another value, no less great, in the internal life of a nation. The prosperity of a nation, the existence of true liberty and justice within it, depend upon the strength of the national idea in the minds and hearts of its citizens. The reawakening of that idea in our people is what England needs more than any other reform. After two generations and more devoted to the assertion of the right of the individual to do as he pleased, subject to the police regulations, our own generation abounds in saviours of society who assert a new variant of the old idea—the right of the individual to get what he wants out of others through the machinery of the vote, and the right of one class to use its political power against other classes. These things do not make for the greatness or the happiness of England. What is wanted is the assertion, not of rights, but of duties. What our people most need to learn is the lesson that their duty as Englishmen comes first, and their individual or class interests second. There is no better

school for teaching that lesson than a military system, where men of all classes work side by side at a common task, where every detail of that task reminds them that they have a duty in common, a duty which may some day demand of each and all of them the one supreme sacrifice, which is the same for rich and poor, workman and employer, landlord and tenant—the sacrifice of their lives for England.

VII

THE NEED FOR CLEAR THINKING¹

My object is to draw the attention of the Committee to the gravity of the military situation as a whole, and to the urgent necessity of bringing our military preparations into some sort of correspondence with our general national policy. The point I wish to insist upon is that we should face the logical consequences of the policy to which this country already stands committed with the general approval of the great majority on both sides of the House, and that we should shape our military preparations by the same standard by which our naval preparations are invariably determined—the standard, I mean, of the force we may have to encounter in war. It is common ground to us all in this House that we must at any cost and at all hazards maintain the supremacy of the British Navy against the growing menace of German rivalry at sea. It is also common ground, at any rate among the great majority of us, that the domination of Europe by a great military power which is also our greatest rival at sea would in the long run make the retention of our naval supremacy impossible, and that consequently the maintenance of France as an independent Great Power in Europe is, in the present situation, not only an honourable obligation, but a vital interest to the safety of this country. It is further common ground that in certain eventualities, eventualities which seemed by no means remote less than a year ago, we should be prepared to send a military force to France to assist her.

¹ Speech on the Army Estimates in the House of Commons, July 4, 1912.

What ought also to be common ground, and no less common ground than those matters I have already mentioned, is that the force thus sent should be adequate to achieve its purpose. If we send a force at all, and it is agreed that we should send it—[Hon. Members: 'No.']—it is by the great majority on both sides of this House, and if we send a force at all we should send it to make sure of victory and not to share a defeat.

A few weeks ago the First Lord of the Admiralty delivered a lucid and striking statement, in which he laid down the course of naval policy for this country. Throughout that statement he laid down his policy with direct and specific reference to German armaments. There was not a sentence in that speech which anybody could consider provocative, or which implied either the inevitableness or even the probability of a conflict. But throughout that speech there ran the clear and explicit recognition of the duty of the British Admiralty to maintain a Navy which, in the event of a conflict, should not be defeated, and which the German Navy should not be able even to hope to defeat. Why should we not have from the Secretary of State for War an equally clear, explicit statement of the relative forces which would take the field in France and Belgium at the outbreak of that same conflict, and an equally clear recognition from him of the duty of the War Office to provide a force which would make it unlikely that a German attack upon France would succeed, and therefore in the highest degree improbable that that attack would ever be attempted? What seems to me essential is that we should not let our success at sea, if we can achieve it, be neutralised and frustrated by failure on land. After all, success on sea alone will not bring the conflict to a satisfactory conclusion. It took ten years of war, imposing a crushing burden on the people of this country, before the temporary command of the sea which we won at Trafalgar was definitely made

good at Leipzig and Waterloo. I wonder when this country will recognise that we are going back to the conditions of those great struggles for existence of the past, and that we are leaving behind us those easy times in which command of the sea could be maintained by building a few extra battleships from time to time, and when our Army was simply looked upon as an incidental instrument to help the local policy of the India Office or the Colonial Office ?

All I ask is that the same frank recognition of facts, the same rational consideration of strategical probabilities, and the same clear thinking, which, with the assent of every party in this country, we use when we discuss the problem of a war with Germany or any other Power at sea, should also be brought to bear when we are considering the possibility of that same war with Germany, or any other Power, on land. The question I should like the right hon. gentleman to answer is, whether or not we have a military force strong enough to render France secure in the event of attack. Has any right hon. gentleman, in addressing this House, ever put that question before us ? Do we even pretend to face it ? Let me remind the Committee that since the crisis of last year Germany has added very considerably to her Navy. Immediately, and with the assent of every one, we responded by a substantial increase of our Navy. May I also remind the Committee that since that same crisis Germany has added 80,000 men to her Army for the express purpose of strengthening the force that is to march through Belgium to crush the French left. It is upon our Expeditionary Force that the brunt of that march would fall. Has any responsible Minister come down to this House and asked for even a single battalion to be added to the strength of our Army ?

I would ask whether there is really any conceivable reason why our Expeditionary Force should be adequate to fulfil the purpose which our policy now assigns to it. Is there

any reason why, under the system which we now have, it should be adequate? What is that system? It is a system under which we keep a considerable force in India on an establishment fixed somewhere in the 'sixties. We keep a handful of troops scattered throughout the world in certain naval garrisons and other stations whose strength is also in the main determined by old convention, or by the number of units available, and not by military demands. To keep those detachments supplied with drafts we also keep a certain number of units at home in this country. When those units are filled up with their reserves they provide the Expeditionary Force. In other words, the Expeditionary Force with which we expect to confront the gravest crisis which this country has had to face since the Napoleonic war is a mere incidental by-product of our recruiting and drafting arrangements, and bears no relation whatever to the task which we assign to it, and which we fondly hope it may fulfil. That system is a system established forty years ago; that is the system which broke down in the South African War; and that is the system as it exists to-day.

I admit that our mobilisation arrangements have been very considerably improved in the interval. But let me make clear the full extent of that improvement. Before the South African War we did not calculate, on the same total strength of units, to mobilise more than 120,000, or three army corps. We did not, as a matter of fact, meditate sending more than 80,000 of those men abroad. But when the South African War came we did send abroad 100,000 of those men and something like 30,000 Militia in the first few months of the war. We brought up the strength of the Regular Army to as high a figure as 176,000, and maintained it at a figure above 150,000 for the rest of the war. Together with these there were something like 30,000 Militia, bringing our maximum Regular and

Militia force up to over 200,000. To-day, after the Militia has been absorbed into the Regular Army, we profess to send 170,000 men in organised formations at the very outset of the war. I admit that that is to the good as far as it goes. But does it go far enough to meet our requirements? That is the question to which, I maintain, this Committee is entitled to have from the Secretary of State as clear an answer as that which the First Lord of the Admiralty habitually gives to the corresponding question when it is asked in reference to naval affairs. What is the force which, in his opinion and in that of his advisers, is sufficient to make the success of a German attack upon France unlikely, and therefore the attack itself altogether improbable? Judging by figures which are available to everybody, it would appear that Germany in such an attack would have a superiority of at least 300,000 or 400,000 men in the fighting line. Has our General Staff, or has the French General Staff, decided that 170,000 British troops are sufficient to redress that inequality? If not, what figure do they consider sufficient? I know that there are hon. Members in some parts of the House who consider the whole aim and method of the Government's foreign policy to be mistaken, and who object to the consequences of the policy as well as to the policy itself. But the Government are not entitled to dismiss this question. The policy is theirs. They have contemplated the consequences, and they contemplate them to-day. All I ask is that, if they contemplate these consequences, they should so contemplate them that they should end in victory and not in disaster.

Let me turn to the actual force which, whether sufficient or not for its purpose, we profess to be able to send. On the last occasion when I criticised the composition of that force, the right hon. gentleman brandished a mysterious secret envelope in the face of the Committee and suggested that if only he were at liberty to divulge its precious contents

it would at once dispose of all my criticisms. After a considerable interval and many delays I have been able to see the figures in question. They neither staggered nor alarmed me. There is nothing in those figures which in any way affects the substance of the criticism that I made on that occasion, and which, as briefly as possible, I will summarise again to-day. Take, first of all, the vital question of horses. Unless you have a sufficient supply of horses you cannot be said to mobilise your force ; it might just as well stay at home. The military requirement of horses for the Expeditionary Force is 44,000. The last time the right hon. gentleman gave any information to the Committee he acknowledged that no arrangement for the purchase or supply of horses had been made, but that a scheme was being worked out. Has that scheme been worked out ? Are the horses available to-day for the moment of mobilisation ? Are they likely to be available in sound condition to take the field at once ? What provision has been made for the 86,000 horses required for the mobilisation of the Territorial Force, or the 18,000 required for the rest of the Regular troops left at home ?

I will pass from the question of horses, with which other Members are more competent to deal than I am, and come to the even more serious question of the shortage of officers. As things stand at present, on mobilisation the Expeditionary Force will be short of something like 1200 officers out of a total of 5800. From where is that deficiency going to be supplied ? Are you going to strip the officers from the Home Departmental staffs, which will be heavily overworked at the outbreak of war ? Are you going to take them from the Special Reserve, which is 1300 officers, or 40 per cent., under establishment. Are you going to take them from the Territorial Force, which is 1800 officers under establishment ? I know there are certain sources of supply. There are 3000 officers on the roll of the General

Reserve of Officers, of whom, I suppose, at the most, 1000 would be fit to take the field. The right hon. gentleman's predecessor informed the House of Lords the other day that he hoped to get 500 officers from the Officers' Training Corps, and another 200 from the second year cadets at Sandhurst and Woolwich. The right hon. gentleman himself on 12th March hoped to get another 700 by sudden promotion from the ranks. That gives you a total of some 2400 officers of a sort, enough, I admit, to fill up the Expeditionary Force and to supply nearly half the deficiency in the Special Reserve and Territorials. But are these expedients really satisfactory? If they are unsatisfactory on mobilisation, what will they be when war has been going on for a few weeks? We might well have to face the possibility of losing a thousand officers in the first month of fighting. How are you to replace them?

This weakness of officers might not be so injurious if you had a really homogeneous force which they could take over. Unfortunately, that is exactly what you have not got. When you mobilise, barely forty per cent. of your force will consist of soldiers who have been serving in the line. Of the rest the vast majority will consist of reservists, separated from the young soldiers by a gap of anything from five to thirteen years, and who, during those five to thirteen years, have in the great majority of cases not handled a rifle or had a day's training. The only connecting link between these two dissimilar categories of soldiers are the old soldiers serving on for pension, whom, I gather, the War Office have been exceptionally busy of late in trying to eliminate from our battalions. Is it fair to throw men together like that, put them under the command of a boy straight from Sandhurst or of a sergeant promoted in that week, and lead them straight into the field against overwhelming numbers of the most highly-organised Army in Europe? What, again, are the materials with which you

are to keep that force up to strength in the field ? From the very first week of the war your drafts will consist in the main of Special Reservists, youths with six months' training, and of very indifferent physique, and a certain number of oldish men of Section D of the Reserve. I know that, according to the official calculations, there is a sufficient supply of drafts to keep the Army up to strength for over six months—for something like seven or eight months—under normal conditions. But suppose the conditions are not normal ? Suppose the war begins, as it well may, with three or four heavy battles in succession : you will have exhausted the whole of your available drafts in the first few weeks of the war. More than that, your whole force may have been so terribly punished as to be no longer fit to be taken into action without a considerable interval. Your opponents, when their divisions are spent, can replace them with new ones from their inexhaustible reserves at home, drawn from the trained manhood of the nation. When your divisions are spent, how do you propose to replace them ?

So much for the problem of war across the narrow seas. Are we any better prepared to deal with the problem of Home defence ? Let me remind the Committee that that problem, too, is an entirely new one. Eight or ten years ago, when France was the only possible invader whom we had to consider, it obviously seemed absurd to contemplate the possibility of anything above a small raid. The harbour facilities of France, her opportunities of shipping, were not such that in the face of the overwhelming superiority of our Navy there was any likelihood that a really substantial force could be sent across the Channel. But the situation was evidently modified when the potential invader was no longer France but Germany, with her immense shipping, her splendid harbours, and her great facilities for embarkation. From that time onwards the possibility

of a substantial invasion, usually fixed at 70,000 men—for what reason nobody has been able to discover—has been contemplated, and, in fact, made the basis of our scheme for Home defence, such as it is. There has been a further profound modification of the situation, the consequences of which have not yet been recognised by the Government, though we were brought face to face with those consequences only last year. We realised then for the first time that the whole problem of naval strategy in its relation to Home defence was seriously modified by the necessity, to which we are committed, of immediately dispatching the Expeditionary Force across the seas at the very outbreak of war. The old idea that the command of the sea should first be definitely established, and the security of our coasts made good, before any substantial force was sent abroad, has been definitely abandoned. Our Navy under present conditions will have to concentrate its attention on one primary objective, the safe passage of the Expeditionary Force at the moment it is wanted. Our opponents will have the choice of two objectives. They can attempt either to interfere with the dispatch of the Expeditionary Force or to cover an invasion, a counterstroke intended either to bring us to our knees or, at any rate, to prevent a considerable part of the Expeditionary Force from going, and so to clear the field for the German advance through Flanders.

The right hon. gentleman is, I know, not seriously concerned about this prospect of invasion. He has persuaded himself that we shall have left in this country when the Expeditionary Force has started an Army of over 400,000 men, who will eat up any invader as a mere nothing. Let me examine his 'Army' of 400,000, and the 144,000 Regulars whom this Army is supposed to include. More than half of those 144,000 'Regulars' are the rejections of the Expeditionary Force, recruits, young

men under age and of insufficient physique, and temporary and accidental casualties. Of the remaining 70,000, 15,000, according to the mobilisation tables, are to go abroad, at once, as the first contingent of drafts. Another 15,000, we are told, are required to make up the twenty-seven extra special battalions to serve on the lines of communication, or to go, if they can, to the Mediterranean. Another 8000 are Reservists resident in Canada and Australia. In fact, at the most you have some 30,000 to 40,000 fully grown and trained men available after the Expeditionary Force has started, and the whole of these may be called upon after the first two big battles. Apart from the strength and composition of the force, what about its officers, its non-commissioned officers, its transport? The only thing it can do, and the only thing I believe it is intended to do, is to act as a sedentary force to defend our naval bases, to busy itself with the training of recruits, and the sending forward of drafts.

Clearly, then, the task of Home defence, the task of eating up the invader, is wholly left to the Territorials. What are the deficiencies of that force other hon. Members who will follow will make clear much better than I can. But why should the Territorial Force ever be supposed to be adequate for the purpose of defending this country? Was its strength or its period of training ever determined by a consideration of the present position or of any serious development? Of course not. What has fixed these things is the amount of spare time that a sprinkling of patriotic citizens find they can give to the work. Here, again, I maintain the time has come when we have the right to demand that the strength of our preparation for Home defence should be fixed by no other standard than that of the task that will be imposed upon our forces. What those forces are, what their training and numbers should be, and how they should be distributed, is a matter

for the General Staff to decide ; but what is obvious and patent to every one is that at present our Home defence arrangements are nothing but a sham, and a dangerous sham. Owing to that sham we will be paralysed in our action in a crisis. As for the power of expansion supposed to be provided, I maintain there is no more power of expansion in our military system to-day than there was when the South African War broke out, or the Elgin Commission produced its famous Report.

I have dealt so far with a single military problem, the great problem of a struggle with Germany, and with operations—whose object is essentially the command of the sea—which may have to be fought out on the two sides of the narrow seas. These are not the only problems which we, with our world-wide Empire, have to face. The public have just had their attention called to the fact that we have practically abdicated our naval supremacy in the Mediterranean. What of the military consequences of that abdication ? Our military garrisons and stations in the Mediterranean and elsewhere have been fixed on the assumption of the local command of the sea. If that local command of the sea is abandoned, or, at any rate, becomes intermittent, is that not a reason for strengthening those garrisons ? Those garrisons are weaker than ever before. At the present moment we have four battalions of the line less in Malta and Gibraltar than there were at the time of our most overwhelming naval superiority in those waters. Then there is the question of the garrison in Egypt. I venture to say a brigade in Egypt was inadequate enough at the time when we had complete command of the Mediterranean, and the prestige that that command gave us, when we had surplus regiments at Malta which we could have hurried over, and when we could send a considerable force in a week or two from this country. Have we surplus battalions at Malta

to-day, and, if we had, could we send them? Would we dare to send reinforcements from this country to Egypt, if there was any trouble? If that be so, the force in Egypt is ridiculously inadequate for the dangers that may arise.

After all, at this moment the whole of the Eastern world, from Tripoli to the China Sea, is in a state of ferment. No one can foretell what may be the outcome of the struggle now going on in the Mediterranean. Can any one foresee what contingencies might arise at any moment in Abyssinia, Persia, Afghanistan, or China, which might mean a call, not for an enormous national effort, but for considerable reinforcements to our permanent establishments, or the temporary dispatch of 15,000 or 20,000 men. Yet, apart from the handful of troops in South Africa, whose admirable strategical situation would admit of their immediate dispatch as reinforcements to any part of the East, we could not spare even a single division to safeguard the interests of the Empire in that quarter. If we could, could we spare the ships to protect them? The fact is—and the sooner we recognise it the better—that from Gibraltar eastwards to Vancouver the German army and navy have already put this country out of action as a serious naval or military Power.

I have endeavoured to state in its main outlines the gravity of the military problem which, whether we like it or not, we have to face. It is not a question of choice, any more than our foreign policy or our naval policy are really questions of choice. It is a question of the inevitable development of the conditions of the world, and the only question is whether we should recognise these changed conditions, adapt ourselves, and reorganise our preparations so as to meet them successfully, or whether we should go on closing our eyes to them till we meet the inevitable disaster?

As things stand our whole military system is based on certain conventions which may have been useful to us

forty years ago, but which have nothing whatever to do with the situation to-day, or with its dangers and difficulties. We have not got adequate forces to send abroad for a great struggle for existence in order to protect our naval supremacy, and we have not got the forces necessary to serve as a shield at home in order to allow our sword-arm to do its work by land or sea. We have not got any spare force to meet the requirements of our position as a vast world-Empire whose responsibilities are continually forced upon us. It is not my concern to fix the precise measure of that inadequacy or to suggest any definite scheme of reform. I would only, in conclusion, lay before the Committee one or two considerations and one general principle—a general principle which I have already repeated a good many times. My general principle is that your military preparations must be determined by one standard, and one standard only, and that is the measure of the task which your soldiers will be called upon to perform. Till you do that all talk of Army reform, all laudation of this or that scheme, is a mere groping in the dark, a mere waste of effort, and a waste of national resources. Of the considerations that I would urge, the first is that it is utterly futile to think you can deal with the present military situation on the basis of the present Estimates. Even if you confine yourself to merely making good the present system, you will require no small increase in the Estimates. What will it cost to attract and secure the necessary officers? What will it cost to perfect your mobilisation arrangements? What will it cost to bring your home battalions up to a proper establishment? What will be the cost of getting the necessary recruits for that purpose? What will it cost to make certain of your requirements in horses and motor transport? What will it cost to bring the Special Reserve and the Territorials up to their establishments? You may easily spend £4,000,000 or £5,000,000 on these

objects, and even then you will only have made a beginning.

I know that this is not an attractive prospect. I do not suppose it would have been an attractive prospect to the House of Commons twenty years ago to have been informed that the Naval Estimates were to rise from £14,000,000 to £45,000,000. I expect hon. Members on both sides of the House would have gasped twenty years ago if they had been told that. But it is no use gasping. We have got to face the facts! At the same time I do not believe that any expenditure of money that we can possibly afford will meet our requirements so long as we adhere to our present system. We are up against the limit of recruiting for the Regulars. I doubt if we could to-day raise a single fresh division for our Regular Army if needed for the Mediterranean; or whether by recruiting we could bring our battalions to 800 men, which is the lowest figure requisite to give them a proper composition and their necessary strength when they take the field. As to the Territorial Force, I should have thought it would be obvious by now that under present conditions you are not going to get any permanent increase. Has any Member of the Committee contemplated what it would cost to get a Territorial Force, adequate in numbers and of a sufficient period of training, on a business footing, instead of merely asking patriotic people to give the spare end of their time; and what would be the effect of such an attempt on recruiting for the Regular Army and for the Special Reserve?

For my own part, I do not believe that our needs can ever be met, even at the most ruinous cost, without recourse to the principle of universal service—at any rate for Home defence. On that principle I believe they can be got, but I am not going to elaborate that point to-day. I will quote a few words from an authority which will weigh with this House, and which ought to weigh very con-

siderably with the right hon. gentleman the Secretary for War, the authority of Major Seely, D.S.O., of the Hants Carabineers. He said :—

‘I am strongly in favour of this matter being put before the public quite frankly. Our countrymen should be told that the danger is imminent, that it can even easily be overcome by their own personal exertions, and that in no other way can it be overcome. Not by spending money on ships, although the Navy must have our first care, not, most assuredly, by shouting about Imperial greatness, but by personal self-sacrifice alone can this Empire be maintained. I go further, I believe that if all these warnings fall upon deaf ears, at no distant date this Empire, of which we are so proud, will fall to pieces, and that this nation will be humbled to the dust.’

Lastly, and for one moment, I would add I do not believe that by any system, whether national service or any other, these small islands alone can indefinitely maintain the burden of the defence of our world-wide Empire, and that it is only by the partnership of Imperial union that this defence can be sustained without a burden that will be a crushing one to every part of the Empire. I believe myself that any policy that will strengthen that union, that will strengthen the intercourse between ourselves and the Dominions; any policy that will increase the population and resources of those Dominions, must be regarded as a vital and essential contribution to the problem of naval and military defence. We are welcoming to England to-day the Prime Minister of Canada, who has come on a mission of Imperial partnership to discuss the problem of naval defence. We hope for fruitful results from that discussion both now and in the more distant future. But I would remind the Committee of one thing; that is, that in our time the main responsibility for the defence of this Empire, the main responsibility towards the rest of the Empire and towards our successors, will fall upon this country.

VIII

NATIONAL POLICY AND NATIONAL STRATEGY¹

WHAT I shall attempt to do to-night is simply to remind you that war is not a purely technical business capable of being studied in complete isolation from everything else, but is an essential part of national life, such as it exists to-day, and that the science or art of war is intimately and indissolubly bound up with the wider science or art of statesmanship, of which it is only a branch.

There is no more fatal habit of mind, and none easier to fall into, than the habit of thinking in watertight compartments. No subject is so habitually kept in a compartment, both in serious historical writing and in ordinary political discussion, in this country at any rate, as the subject of war. The ordinary English attitude towards war is to regard it as an abnormal and irrational state of affairs, contrasted with the normal and rational condition of peace, a recrudescence of primitive barbarism brought about from time to time by more or less accidental or unnecessary causes. The ambition or tactlessness of rulers, the greed of financiers, the irritability of democracies, the nagging of irresponsible journalists—these are the sort of causes that are supposed to precipitate these unnecessary catastrophes into which the unfortunate nations of the world are periodically plunged. To avert the worst consequences of this prevalent folly every nation has, according to this view, to bear a heavy burden of

¹ Address to the Cambridge University Officers' Training Corps in camp at Aldershot, June 26, 1911.

unproductive expenditure in the shape of military and naval preparations, an expenditure deplored by some not only as injurious to social progress, but also as offering a direct incentive and provocation to war, justified by others as a necessary insurance against an otherwise certain risk.

Such a conception of the nature of war and of its place in national life is quite inadequate. War and the preparation for war are not isolated phenomena, but essential and necessary elements of the national life. Even the most primitive savage tribe fights or, at least, carries arms, not for the mere pleasure of killing and being killed, but either to defend its own hunting-grounds, in other words the livelihood of its members, or else to acquire new hunting-grounds, or slaves, or some other direct gain. And the military preparations of the modern state are based on exactly the same principle, namely the defence of the territory which supports the economic life of the community, the defence of trade interests, or of political institutions, or else the extension of that territory and the expansion of those interests and institutions by successful war. The effort and expenditure devoted to military preparations are in their essence no more unproductive than the effort and expenditure devoted to building houses to defend us from the cold, or to building ships to conquer distance and annex new markets. I am speaking, of course, of the world as it exists to-day; whether military preparations can be rendered superfluous by mutual agreement is another question on which I may touch later.

This intimate connection of war and national interests tends to be obscured by the fact that, under modern conditions, war is for the most part conducted on paper without actual fighting. It is only very occasionally that the calculations on paper have to be reinforced or corrected by the practical test of the battlefield. What I mean by

warfare on paper is, of course, the silent and unobtrusive, but none the less effective, warfare of diplomacy. There can be no better instance of the danger of thinking in watertight compartments than this very subject of diplomacy or foreign policy. Even people who ought to know better can often be heard contrasting diplomacy and war as two entirely different means of achieving national ends, or suggesting that a wise and conciliatory foreign policy might be an adequate substitute for armaments. They might as well suggest that in private life a wise and tactful use of one's cheque-book would enable one to dispense with the need for really having any money at the bank. Diplomacy is carried on not only for the same ends, but with the same instruments as war. Battleships and battalions, sailors and soldiers, these are essential factors which enter into every diplomatic negotiation. Never mentioned, but always clearly understood, they form the basis of every discussion. Whatever the object of a nation's foreign policy, defensive or aggressive, territorial or commercial, its success is directly dependent on the actual fighting strength behind it. The money and effort spent on preparation for war correspond not so much to an insurance, an expenditure whose benefits are only reaped when some fortuitous circumstance precipitates war, as to the cash reserve of a great bank, which, though stored away in its vaults against some great emergency, is yet in daily employment through the medium of its note circulation.

I could give no better instance of this tacit use of armaments than the part played in international politics by the British Navy during the last twenty years. The 'nineties of the last century opened with a movement for overseas expansion on the part of the three leading European Powers, France, Germany, and Russia, a movement which necessarily brought them into conflict with

established British interests in Africa and in the East. That conflict was peculiarly acute between us and the Dual Alliance of France and Russia. To secure their objects the Allies started great naval programmes. We replied in kind, and in a few years our Naval Estimates were doubled. Crisis after crisis arose, in West Africa, in Siam, in the Far East, and was temporarily adjusted. The decisive point came in 1898 when, over the Fashoda incident, the Allies definitely decided that they could not fight England at sea. No one certainly who, like myself, had the good fortune at that moment to see gathered off Crete and off Corfu two British squadrons, each singly capable of holding the Mediterranean against all comers, could fail to realise the meaning of the bloodless Trafalgar won during those October weeks, a naval victory whose fruits are the undisputed command of the sources of the Nile and the permanent control of a continuous territory from the mouth of the Nile to the east coast of Africa. A year later our defeats in South Africa for the moment gave rise to a tentative consideration of the possibility of the three greatest European Powers combining against us. But even that coalition, it was realised, would have been insufficient to defeat our Navy. We were allowed to pursue our task in South Africa unmolested. From the South African struggle we emerged with a thorny military and international problem cleared out of our path and with the Navy stronger than ever. With that naval strength we purchased the alliance of Japan, itself involving a further strengthening of our naval position. The general settlement of our outstanding difficulties with France, followed by the Anglo-French *entente* or informal alliance, and the subsequent establishment of good relations with Russia finally marked the fact that our old rivals had given up the idea of competing and were prepared to co-operate.

I do not wish for a moment to disparage the work of Lord Lansdowne or of Sir Edward Grey in bringing about this change, or to minimise the undoubted influence exercised by the personality of our late sovereign, King Edward VII. But for all that the essential difference between British foreign policy in the 'nineties, with its record of continuous friction, its apparent alternation of rashness and timidity, and its absence of definite results, and British foreign policy between 1902 and 1907 with its broad settlements of outstanding difficulties and general atmosphere of good-will, was not so much a difference in the skill and tact of individuals as in the conditions under which they worked.

But the connection of a nation's fighting strength and its fighting preparations with its internal policy is hardly less close than that with its external policy. The potential fighting strength of a nation is after all determined by its internal conditions. Only a populous and highly organised community can put a large army into the field and concentrate it for effective action. Only a wealthy community can provide the armaments required by modern war, more particularly at sea. Only a skilled industrial people can provide the men to work the complicated mechanism of a modern battleship. The general economic prosperity and progress of the nation is, in other words, a prime factor which the strategist must keep in view.

Again, if soldiers are to fight well they must be patriotic—that is to say, the institutions of their country must be such that they believe them to be worth defending or even worth extending to other countries. The weakness of Russia in her war with Japan was the weakness of her institutions as well as the mere miscalculation of the relative strength of her armaments. In other words, the constitutional reformer, if his work is truly done, is a military reformer too.

Further, if soldiers are to stand the physical strain of war they must be healthy, strong, and enduring. The disappearance of our agricultural population, the problem of the slums, the ravages of diseases like tuberculosis and syphilis, the evil effects of intemperance—all these are questions which closely affect the strategist as well as the social reformer.

Modern war, again, with its scientific apparatus, with its open order and necessity for individual initiative, demands mental and moral qualities of a high order in the rank and file as well as in officers. The strategist as well as the social reformer will want a nation educated in the highest and fullest sense of the word.

There is no real contrast, and ought to be none, between a nation's strategy and its internal policy. National Defence not only exists for the sake of protecting the institutions and material welfare of a nation, but in its turn it depends for its efficiency upon the soundness of those institutions and upon the adequacy of the material wealth which it is called upon to defend. More than that. A nation's defensive measures can and ought to be so devised as directly to contribute to the general welfare of the nation. Those of us who believe in the purely military necessity of universal service in this country are also alive to the fact that a national army can be made a school of citizenship, a means of testing and improving the health of the nation, and of inculcating a sense of order and discipline which the experience of other countries has found invaluable in the organisation of industry. The necessary expenditure on modern armaments could be made, deliberately, what it already is to some extent, undesignedly, an incentive to industrial efficiency and inventive genius. Above all, the whole difficult problem of Imperial Defence ought to force us to deal with the greatest of our political and economic problems, that of

the internal constitutional arrangements of our Empire, of the distribution of population within it, and of the economic development of its territories.

What I have endeavoured to do so far is to indicate the general relation of strategy to national policy. But for the success of a nation it is essential that the various factors of national life should be not only related, but definitely correlated and proportioned to each other. A want of proportion between a nation's foreign policy and its military preparations, or between its military activities and their economic and social basis, inevitably leads to disaster. The fatal mistake of Napoleon's III.'s foreign policy was not that it was aggressive or provocative, but that it was based on an estimate of French military power which the event proved utterly false. In the case of the Russo-Japanese War we find Alexeieff, the Russian administrator in the Far East, and other persons influential in Court circles, successfully urging on the Russian Government a policy of aggression which the soldiers would never have advocated, and which led straight to a great national humiliation. In the South African War both sides, in a sense, were led into war by a policy out of all proportion to their strategy. In the case of the Boer Republics the error was fundamental. Their policy was incompatible with the permanent existence of the British Empire in South Africa. To attempt to carry it through against the whole power of the British Empire on the basis of less than 50,000 mounted irregulars was nothing less than national suicide. But British policy was hardly less out of proportion to its immediate military measures. The political situation steadily drifted towards a war for which, under our military system, there were practically no troops immediately available on the spot, and for which our whole military system as it then stood—or, indeed, as it stands to-day—was inadequate. We muddled through

somehow, thanks to patriotic improvisation and to the strength of the Navy; but would it not have been much better if during the years preceding the war our military arrangements had been kept in line with the development of the political situation?

The instances I have just given are instances of disproportion between strategy and policy which actually resulted in war. In other cases war is averted by a sudden climb down. The policy of making French territory continuous across Africa from west to east, which inspired the sending of Marchand's mission to Fashoda, was incontinently dropped when the French Government realised that Lord Salisbury meant business, and that he had the bigger Navy behind him. The miserable fiasco of our diplomatic intervention in Turkey in 1895 and 1896 over the Armenian massacres was due to the fact that our policy really demanded a military intervention which we were not prepared to face. The only practical result of all the indignation meetings and sermons which were allowed to dictate British policy was that several hundred thousand more Armenians were massacred than would otherwise have been the case, and that British influence in Turkey, both commercial and political, received a ruinous set back.

Of military and aggressive policy carried beyond all proportion to the internal organisation or resources of a state, and thus leading to eventual collapse, history affords abundant examples. The Ottoman and Spanish Empires are among the most striking in recent centuries. In neither instance could patriotism, religious fanaticism, or genius for war make up for the lack of real political organising power or of a real interest in economic and social progress. The Turks have been driven from battlefield after battlefield, from the walls of Vienna to Budapest, from Budapest to Belgrade, from Belgrade to the Balkans, and from the

Balkans to the very gates of Constantinople, not because they have paid too little attention to war, but because they have paid too much, and have neglected the factors that must always underlie military strength.

Of the converse policy, that of making domestic reform subserve military purposes, Prussia is the example that obviously occurs to the mind. The building up of a free peasant proprietary, which will always be associated with the name of Stein, the establishment of a great system of national education, the promotion of trade, the building of railways—it was upon these measures that Prussia built up the army which humbled Austria and France, and it is the continuation of that same policy of national development which is enabling her to build up the powerful navy which confronts us across the North Sea to-day.

The harmony between policy and strategy which should precede war is not necessarily preserved during the actual course of operations. Once war has started the primary object is to injure the enemy in any manner and in any quarter where the injury can most effectively be done, till he is prepared to come to terms. It is in the settling of those terms that it becomes necessary once more to remember what objects are attainable, what conquests really add to the military or economic strength of the conqueror enough to justify their retention, or, in case of defeat, what surrenders can be acquiesced in with least loss.

Napoleon affords the most conspicuous example in recent history of the mistake of allowing policy to be dominated by military ideas and carried away by purely military success. At no point does he seem to have realised that the principle of pushing success to the uttermost does not apply in policy as it does on the battlefield, or that he was dealing with political and moral factors far too deep-rooted in men's minds to be abolished by even the most amazing series of campaigns. Bismarck's action in 1866,

on the other hand, will always stand out as the triumph of statecraft over military opportunism. At the moment it seemed easy to annex Bohemia and humble the House of Hapsburg for ever. But Bismarck knew that Prussia already had enough to absorb and co-ordinate without saddling herself with the Czech problem, and that the friendship or neutrality of a powerful Austro-Hungarian Empire was a necessity for the next great step forward. When that next step came it was Bismarck again who would have been content only to reincorporate, in a united Germany, what had been essentially German in the past ; it was the soldiers who insisted on the retention of Metz, and by doing so laid a handicap on German policy from which it is still suffering to-day.

On the other hand, there are cases where, by stopping short, the whole political or military object of a war is thrown away. Is there any one who does not now admit that it would have been an incredible folly and a monstrous crime if, in the South African War, we had stopped short of the complete incorporation of the Republics in the British Empire ? What conceivable terms of peace were there, short of the terms finally asserted, which would not have meant the recurrence of exactly the same deadlock within a generation, and which would not have made South African Union under the British flag an impossibility ? Again, had Augustus and Tiberius but persevered with their half-accomplished conquest of Germany, and had the border of the Roman Empire been drawn from the Elbe or the Vistula to the Black Sea, that shorter frontier across the waist of Europe could easily have been defended for centuries longer with the help of the added economic strength and moral force of a Romanised Teutonic race. As it was, the Germans remained outside the Empire, absorbing none of its civic spirit, while acquiring, as mercenaries, all the secrets of

its military power. When the time came they broke through the gaps offered by the long and straggling Imperial frontier which curved round them from the mouth of the Rhine to the mouth of the Danube, and destroyed the Empire which otherwise they might have helped to defend and maintain. Our own policy on the Indian frontier contains more than an element of the same weakness that characterised the Roman policy on the German frontier. It may be justified for our time, and by the present economic conditions of India, but it is not a policy which can be maintained unmodified for an indefinite future.

Assuming, then, the desirability of a due correlation and continuous adjustment between policy and strategy, a further question obviously presents itself. Which is to be the determining factor, or is there any third factor, or group of factors, which determines them both? The answer that I would give is that, at any particular moment, either may be the determining factor. At one time it may be necessary to cut down national policy to the limits of what the military and naval preparations of the nation can safely support. At another it may be essential to recast a nation's whole military organisation in order to make possible the carrying out of a policy which all are agreed in regarding as vital to the national welfare. But underlying both, and in the long run exercising a determining influence over both, are the fundamental factors of geographical situation and economic conditions. A nation inhabiting an easily defended territory, with an abundant margin of natural resources still available for development to meet the needs of its population, naturally tends to cut down its defensive or offensive armaments and to maintain an attitude of isolation or indifference in the domain of foreign policy. The United States, at any rate till comparatively recently, is a typical instance of such a nation. The British Empire during the greater part of

the last century was another. Germany, on the other hand, and the British Empire of to-day, are typical instances of states whose geographical situation makes the problem of defence and foreign policy one of continual importance and of never-ending difficulty.

The economic overcrowding of a territory inevitably tends towards an aggressive policy, whether that policy manifests itself, as it has done from the earliest times, in direct invasion and annexation of the territory of other states, or in the development of external economic interests which sooner or later conflict with other economic interests or territorial rights, and so call for the intervention of an active diplomatic and military policy. Conversely, the economic under-development of a territory is a constant temptation to direct invasion or interference, all the more so as that same under-development generally implies inadequate material resources on which to base an effective resistance. In the British Empire the under-population of Australia and Canada each create military and political problems which are not counterbalanced, but in one sense only aggravated, by the different problems arising from the over-population of the United Kingdom and from its excessive dependence on foreign trade. In such a case economic redistribution of population would mean an immense relief to the diplomatic and military burden imposed upon those responsible for the general policy of the Empire.

Again, oversea trade leads naturally and inevitably to naval armaments. Carthage, Venice, and Holland all followed the same course of evolution from trading communities into maritime Empires. And in each case a one-sided development based on an inadequate foundation of military strength and productive power came to eventual disaster. England's maritime power was based on a larger and more secure foundation of territory, population, and production. But the foundation which was adequate

in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is fast becoming inadequate in the twentieth. Neither in industrial production nor in man-power does the United Kingdom afford a material basis sufficient for the indefinite maintenance of British Imperial policy and for the safety of the British Empire and of British trade. A new basis has to be found in the vast territories and undeveloped resources of the Dominions, and the finding of that basis constitutes the great political and economic problem of our age.

National policy is, in fact, a continuous process of re-adjustment to changes in economic and military conditions. In the main it is the economic conditions which determine policy, though they in their turn are influenced and sometimes determined by military aptitudes or military discoveries. A new system of tactics, or a bold foreign policy, as well as the pressure of economic necessity, may enlarge the boundaries of a state. In any case, the process of adjustment is one which from time to time involves war. The actual frequency of war in that process of adjustment is, indeed, a steadily diminishing one. With the great powers of the modern world the cataclysmic method of adjustment rarely presents advantages commensurate with its drawbacks. The immediate object to be gained does not compare, as a rule, with the immense cost and immense risk of war waged on the modern scale. There is therefore a natural tendency to look for a peaceful adjustment, or, at any rate, to postpone a crisis till the accumulation of questions at issue makes the conflict worth while undertaking. This tendency to peaceful adjustment is accentuated by the grouping of the great Powers into large political systems like the Triple Alliance or the Triple Entente. It may also be usefully reinforced by the development of the practice of arbitration to cover all issues of relatively minor importance.

On the other hand, the notion that the process of adjust-

ment itself can be wholly superseded by arbitration is an illogical and absurd fantasy. It is based on the extraordinary theoretical assumption that all states, large and small, backward or progressive, are simply individual legal persons with definite rights as members of some superior community, and on the even more extraordinary practical assumption that the maintenance of the political *status quo* in the world is either desirable or tolerable to progressive states. If those assumptions had been acted upon in the last century there would have been no Greece and no Bulgaria; Naples and Sicily would still be under the Bourbons, and Lombardy and Venice under the Hapsburgs; Germany would still be a mere geographical expression; Asia and Africa would have remained closed to European civilisation. What better reason is there for stereotyping the world to-day than there was seventy or eighty years ago? Does any one expect Germany, or Japan, or Bulgaria, to acquiesce permanently in the existing limitations to their economic development and their military power? Are the Portuguese, or we ourselves for that matter, to retain immense territories for ever regardless of our capacity to develop and people them or—what really comes to the same thing—to defend them? We have only to put the question to realise the sloppiness of thought which underlies all this amiable talk about universal arbitration. War will grow less frequent with the growth and aggregation of responsible, peace-loving and effectively defended world-powers. But it will be long before it wholly disappears. And in the meanwhile any such world-power that neglects either its external defences, or its internal cohesion and development, is guilty of provoking the occasions of war and setting back the clock of peaceful progress.

The British Empire, above all others, owes it to the cause of the peaceful development of the world to make

sure its defences both by immediate defensive preparations and by those measures which are essential to provide the political and economic basis for a world-wide defence. Compelled, as it is, by the very fact of its geographical distribution, to be supreme at sea, no other Power can do so much for the maintenance of the general peace. On the other hand, there is no Power whose break up, whether due to external or internal causes, would so certainly inaugurate a new age of unrest and strife in the world.

At present that Empire is wholly unorganised for the task it has to fulfil. It still maintains, it is true, a narrowing margin of naval supremacy. But it maintains it on the wholly inadequate economic basis of the population of the United Kingdom. The military complement to that naval defence is unprovided. Such military system as we have is a mere survival from conditions which are fast passing away. In one part of the Empire, the United Kingdom, our population is grievously overcrowded. It has no room for healthy development in peace, and its daily dependence on oversea supplies constitutes a terrible handicap in war. In other parts of the Empire, such as Canada and Australia, the land cries out for the manhood to develop its resources in peace and to make them secure against the danger of war. There has been no attempt to organise the flow of trade so as to secure a more even distribution of population, a greater output of productive energy, or a more effective economic and political cohesion. Still less has there been any attempt to create the constitutional framework without which there can be neither permanent cohesion in peace or effective defence in war. It is, indeed, an immense task of reconstruction that lies before us if we wish the British Empire, with all that it means for the progress of human development, to become a living and enduring fact.

IX

A PLEA FOR A NATIONAL SYSTEM OF TACTICS¹

THERE is nothing more interesting for the student of war than a consideration of the part played in military history by changes in tactical systems and by national characteristics as reflected in those systems. The importance of strategy is perhaps more apparent to the eye. The qualities of great generals and their plans seem to be in so much more direct relation to the victories on the battlefield. It is less easy to realise that the successes of great generals have in most instances been intimately connected with some marked development in tactics. The greatest soldiers in history have been the men who have realised the value of some new tactical system, and have employed it with energy and confidence. These tactical systems in their turn have necessarily reflected the social conditions of the time, the improvements in arms, and the national characteristics of the race which has employed them. The great conquering nations have been those whose tactical systems have been thoroughly fitted to their social and economic conditions, while making use to the full of all the resources of science available at the time, and have been carried out logically and consistently, without any half-hearted compromise with other systems which may have been successful elsewhere, and in other conditions.

The tactical system of the ancient Greeks was based on a simple and direct principle—that of shock. The men

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were protected by heavy armour, equipped with sixteen-foot spears, and, above all, drilled to an absolute precision of movement which would enable the solid wall of hoplites to sweep away any less well trained force before them. We have all been brought up to admire the glorious heroism of the Spartans at Thermopylæ. But Herodotus, who tells the story, also notes briefly the advantage the little band of Greek heroes possessed in the superior length of their spears and their heavier armour.

For a century and a half no marked progress took place in Greek tactics. It was a semi-barbarian ruler, Philip of Macedon, who conceived the idea of carrying out the principle of shock tactics still further by enormously lengthening the spears of the rear ranks (according to Arrian the spears of the eighth rank were thirty-six feet) and locking a number of ranks of men together in an absolutely solid mass, with its front bristling with innumerable spearheads. Philip made the phalanx; it remained for his son, Alexander, to conquer half the known world with its help. The phalanx represents infantry shock tactics *in excelsis*. There never has been any formation of troops unprovided with long range weapons, whether mounted or on foot, who could stand up against the phalanx on open level ground.

Meanwhile, the Romans, out of touch with Greek military traditions, were developing an entirely different system of their own. In the Greek system the spear was used for the charge, and the charge only. The longer and heavier it was, provided it could be held steadily, the better. In primitive times, as we can see from Homer, the spear was used for hurling as well as for charging. But the Greek tacticians devoted themselves entirely to the latter aspect of the weapon, developing it solely for shock purposes, and making their whole tactical system conform to their principle. The Romans, on the other hand, developed

the spear as a short-range projectile, and deliberately made it effective for that purpose alone, shortening it considerably, and softening the metal of the point, so that it would twist after impact, and could not be used again. A complete tactical system was gradually evolved whose object was to secure the best use of the throwing spear. For men who threw a weapon at several yards distance, and did not charge home, close order was superfluous. The Romans deliberately developed an open order system, by which, after the front rank had thrown their *pila*, the second and third ranks stepped in front of them and took their places. The *quincunx*, or harrow, formation was not only immensely effective in providing a heavy fire of projectiles, but its yielding, elastic, but still coherent, framework, gave little opportunity for shock tactics to get home. Lastly, the effectiveness of the Roman open order formation was but little affected by the ground, and the legion was as effective on broken ground or on a hillside as on the level plain.

These two wholly different systems had each practically reached its full development before they met. In Pyrrhus's Italian campaign, as in the Macedonian wars of a later generation, the result was invariably the same. The Romans could not stand up against the phalanx on the level, but whenever they could draw it on to uneven ground, or in other ways make gaps in the solid wall of spears, they invariably threw it into utter confusion. As an all-round instrument of war the legion beat the phalanx. For centuries it remained supreme, and when it passed away it was not owing to the rise of a superior system, but to the general downfall of the Empire, and the break up of the highly organised political system under which alone such a force could be raised and trained. The Middle Ages, with their knights in armour, represent not an advance in tactics on the Roman system, but a reversion to a more primitive type of war.

It was not till near the end of the Middle Ages that a new and really formidable tactical system arose in Western Europe. Edward I., in his Welsh campaigns, had learnt to realise the effectiveness of the bow in the hands of his troublesome opponents, and deliberately set himself to adopt their methods, and improve on them. He created a nation of archers, and the picked men of this nation under Edward III. and his successors, astonished Europe. For nearly a century the English archers remained supreme, almost as invincible by the ordinary feudal levies as the civilised troops of to-day are by half-armed savages. Here again the secret of success lay in thoroughness. The whole nation gave itself to the new weapon, and English generals made their whole plan of action in battle hinge on the archers. Moreover, the archery system was admirably suited to the English character. The unarmed archer, facing the charge of overwhelming masses of mail-clad horsemen, required above all that imperturbable coolness and steadiness which is as inherent in the English soldier to-day as in his ancestors five centuries ago.

But the bow had to yield to the fire-arm, and while this was developing the shock tactics of spear-armed infantry came to the front again with German and Swiss and Spanish pikemen. The two systems gradually blended, and this blend, or compromise, between the charging tactics of spearmen and firing tactics, subsequently embodied in the shape of the bayonet, has underlain the whole tactical development of European warfare. Gradually a definite form of fire-arm tactics emerged, the line, whose object was to secure the maximum discharge of bullets in a volley. Steadiness and precision were the two things most essential to this system, and no one carried out training based on those qualities more whole-heartedly than Frederick William I. of Prussia. The result was the magnificent instrument of war with which Frederick the

Great achieved his victories. In the wars of the French Revolution the impetuous, ill-trained French levies made, at first, no impression on the highly disciplined lines of Prussians or Austrians they had to deal with. Gradually they turned their own weaknesses to account. Unable to stand up to their opponents in the open, they discovered that there was no reason, after all, why they should not fight on broken ground, and where cover was procurable; without the discipline to maintain a steady line under fire, they found the column a more suitable formation for French impetuosity, preparing the way for its attack by a cloud of skirmishers. What began as the shifts of unskilled enthusiasts became a formidable system of tactics which, under Napoleon, made France, for a time, mistress of Europe. Other armies modified their methods to meet the French onset, but without abandoning their principles. The improvement of fire-arms in the last century has modified tactics still further. But the two principles still remain. The Germans hold fast throughout to the idea of the line, as giving the greatest fire effect; the French hold to the idea of the column, and the attack concentrated on one point. German strategy, corresponding, as strategy always should, with the tactics on which it is based, adheres to the advance of all forces in line, and to enveloping attacks. French strategy keeps large masses in reserve to throw in at the critical point, when the preliminary contact has determined that point. British tactics and strategy are mainly based on text-books, which try to embody the best of both systems, and fail to secure the real advantages of either.

I said just now that the whole development of tactics in Europe since the introduction of fire-arms has involved a blend or compromise between fire-arm tactics and the shock tactics of the lance or pike. As fire-arms improved, the pikemen were reduced in numbers, till eventually

nothing was left of them but the bayonet. But their tradition survived. It governed the whole idea, unfortunately not extinct even now, and absolutely predominant in the British Army before 1899, that all the firing was in some sort a prelude, a preparation for the final shock of an actual charge home. And that idea, in its turn, governed the formation of troops and the whole planning of battles. Meanwhile, in a remote corner of the world, a small nation of fighting farmers was developing a system of tactics of its own, based on the fire-arm alone, a system uncontaminated by tradition or reminiscence of any other weapon. The Boer went out to shoot his enemy as he went out to shoot game. He no more wanted to charge Zulus or British than he wanted to charge lions; his one object in either case was to reach a position whence he could get a fair shot without undue risk. His ordinary means of locomotion, his pony, enabled him to get to such positions quickly. The more extended the chain of these positions, the greater the opportunities for cross-fire and eventual envelopment. Loose extensions were the natural corollary of the system, and fitted in with the independent, self-reliant character of the Boers. There was no recognised formation, no definite distance between individuals—these things were left to be regulated by the ground itself. The whole system, though very imperfectly organised, was absolutely logical, and consistently concentrated on the one object, the most efficient way to shoot men. The war of 1899 taught us what 1881 had apparently failed to teach, how remarkably efficient that method was. Broadly speaking, it may be said that the war showed that untrained, undisciplined Boer farmers were always a match for two or three times their number of trained British troops, not because training and discipline are unimportant matters, but because the logical and self-consistent Boer tactics were so infinitely superior to the inconsistent and confused

blend of rifle and pike tactics, which we shared in common with the rest of Europe.

Throughout history success has gone with those who have taken a tactical principle and worked it out fearlessly to its logical conclusion. And success has been most striking where, as in the case of the Macedonians, the Romans, the English archers, or the Boers, the new tactical system has been developed apart, and has differed most widely from the systems it has had to meet. Yet the last thing those who are responsible for our military affairs would seem to think required of them is the working out of new ideas and new methods in tactics. Nothing is more common than to hear it argued that because the Germans or French employ this or that method, *e.g.* shock tactics for cavalry, we must employ the same method to cope with it. And yet the argument is not a bit more reasonable in itself than the suggestion that those who go hunting rhinoceros should affix a horn to their noses, and try conclusions with the pachyderm at his own tactics. What I should like to plead for is a new English system of tactics suited to the English character, and making the utmost use of every modern development in science. Personally, I believe that we could lay the foundations of such a system in the bold adaptation and improvement of the Boer system, just as Edward I. laid the foundations of our first great age of military glory in adapting a tactical system from the Welsh. But that is not the essential purpose of my plea, which is for throwing over Continental traditions, and boldly devising a style of fighting of our own,

X

MOUNTAINEERING AS A SPORT FOR SOLDIERS ¹

THE legend about Waterloo and the Playing-fields of Eton is likely to die hard. Historians may successfully demolish it, but the British Army will steadily go on believing the theory which it was invented to justify. The playing of outdoor games, the pursuit of sports, is regarded by the inexorable public opinion of the regimental mess as one of the first and most serious of an officer's duties. The advocacy of sport may often lack all sense of proportion; it may even be a real danger by causing the neglect of the more vital military studies. But there is a strong element of truth in it, for all that. War is essentially an outdoor pursuit, calling for the highest combination of mental, moral, and physical qualities, and that combination is in various degrees encouraged and developed by sport in its many forms. Some athletic pursuits, indeed, develop it far more than others, and, if the Army is to be criticised, it is for being too inclined to look with equal favour upon pursuits which, except for affording healthy exercise, training eye and hand, and promoting the sense of comradeship, are of practically no value as a preparation for war, while neglecting the sports that by their very nature are most akin to the soldier's real business in life. Golf or pheasant shooting are typical unmilitary pursuits, to which no soldier ought seriously to devote himself, though harmless enough as an occasional diversion. Polo

¹ From *The Times* of July 25, 1907.

stands on a different level, as a rare training in horsemanship and physical nerve. Hunting stands a good deal higher, for it teaches knowledge of horsemastership and gives an eye for country to boot. Better still is big game shooting, for it takes the sportsman into difficult and often unexplored country, confronts him with a real living opponent, whose habits have to be studied and whose pursuit requires infinite cunning and endurance, and, not unfrequently, brings him face to face with situations where his life depends entirely on his steadiness and skill.

But it is not given to every subaltern to shoot lions in East Africa, or, for that matter, even to stalk deer in the Highlands. Hunting and polo, too, are both expensive pursuits, and afford better training for cavalymen than for the service as a whole. There is one sport accessible to most men, which can be learned and practised at any time of life, which need not be beyond the capacity of limited purses, and which provides an ideal training for war. Yet, for some unknown reason, not one officer in a hundred dreams of taking it up; no colonel has ever been known to press its merits and its charms upon the last-joined subaltern. That sport is mountaineering.

In one sense, indeed, mountaineering ought to be something more for the Army than a sport for the individual. It ought to be a serious and necessary art, in which our officers as a body, or, at any rate, a large proportion of them, should be obliged to acquire at least an elementary proficiency. To the uninitiated the ways of a mountainous country are as a sealed book. In the easiest slope of scree or snow leading up to a pass he will see an impossible precipice. But he will light-heartedly essay to walk in an afternoon—without a nail in his boots—up several thousand feet of jagged *arête*, or across a dozen gullies reverberating all day long to the crash and roar of a crumbling mountain-side. In mountain warfare an army

ignorant of the elements of mountaineering will be as helpless as a flock of sheep in the midst of wolves, if it has to deal with an enemy led by men skilled in rock and snow craft. It will be forced to keep to the main valleys, able to move only along a single track, while its opponents freely cross the country in every direction. If it attempts to follow the enemy's example, it will run all the risks of destruction by avalanches, natural or artificial, of snow or falling rocks, and by all the other perils which beset those who, without knowledge, venture into the jealously guarded fastnesses of the high mountains. Reliance on native guides may prove of little use, even if the natives are friendly, for there are few native races which have acquired more than the merest rudiments of mountain work. The Gurkha comes from the slopes of the Himalayas, but Major Bruce had to bring his men to Switzerland to teach them the art of climbing. How important mountaineering should be to the British Army becomes evident when we reflect that the region which is one of the chief pre-occupations of our strategists, and within which the fate of India is most likely to be settled, is nothing but a great sea of mountains, and as difficult to move about in as Switzerland was in the days of Hannibal. If our General Staff hope for victory in Afghanistan, whether over Russians or over Afghans, they must see to it that our officers are as capable of finding their way over the Hindu Kush at any point as Swiss officers would be of finding their way across the Oberland. Even in South Africa a knowledge of mountaineering possessed by Sir Redvers Buller or his staff might have altered the whole complexion of the Natal campaign. The sheer wall of the great Drakensberg, which, as seen from Estcourt or Colenso, bars the whole western skyline, is broken by more than one gully up which infantry and even machine guns might have been dragged—absolutely unseen and unsuspected by Boers or even by

natives—to the table summit of the range, whence they could have dropped, as from heaven, upon the Free State communications at Oliver's Hoek.

But, quite apart from the question of warfare in mountain countries, climbing affords a training for soldiering in general which no other sport can equal. In no other sport, except in big game shooting, are the conditions so near those of active campaigning. The long days, the early starts—often soon after midnight—the frequent bivouacs the importance of supply and transport, all reproduce the features of war which bulk so much larger in the soldier's experience than the occasional interludes of battle. Every mountaineer is an expert—or fancies himself one—on the question of supplies. With that profound insight into the intimate connection between the problems of supply and transport which can be attained only when one's provisions have to be carried in one's own *rucksack*, he knows exactly what it pays to carry, and what not. No mountaineer would have dreamt of supplying an army with four-pound tins of preserved meat, as the War Office did in South Africa. But it would be a mistake to suppose that mountaineering is mainly a sport for the Army Service Corps. There is no practical problem in staff work that the professors at Camberley can set to equal the planning out of an attack in force upon a really serious mountain. There is the tactical problem of the actual line of attack to the summit. Frontal attack, or flank attack—main face, *arête*, or gully—they all present their difficult and dangerous features, to be elucidated by many a reconnaissance from surrounding heights. For each route, and for each section of it, not only the difficulty, but the time required, has to be taken into account. There is the no less important strategical problem of the valley to be ascended, of the strategical *Aufmarsch* of the forces, and of all the supply and transport questions connected with

it. Where, for instance, is the preceding night's bivouac to be? One spot may be ideal for water and firewood, but yet be useless because it is too low down to allow the party to make sure of getting safely past a certain treacherous snow slope before sunrise. Another may be admirably placed for the next morning's start, but involve the most formidable difficulties in the way of carrying up provisions and kit—difficulties to be surmounted only, perhaps, on the Napoleonic principle that no great success in war was ever achieved on full rations. A third, otherwise suitable, may be swept by falling stones, or too exposed to the wind to make sleep possible. Other subsidiary questions suggest themselves. Can porters be got to help carry up camping things, and thus bring spare blankets, or even a tent, within the sphere of possibilities? Can the army live off the country to any extent—in other words, can firewood be picked up on the way, and will the way to the bivouac lead past a chalet where milk can be bought for the making of chocolate? I admit, regretfully, that it is only in the comparatively unspoilt regions of the Alpine world that these problems of mountaineering staff work still present their full interest. In the ordinary tourist centres every yard of every possible route is known, and the path to every summit is strewn with club huts, if not with two-story hotels. In such circumstances, staff work chiefly centres round the struggle for hotel bedrooms, and extends, subsequently, to discreet investigations, in the hotel and among the guides basking in the sun outside, as to what other parties propose going to the club hut selected for the night, and getting there before them in order to annex the best berths and the first go at the cooking stove.

But, if good intelligence and good staff work are essential elements to success in climbing as in war, it must never be forgotten that on a mountain, as in a battle,

nothing ever happens quite as it was meant to. The easy ridge of snow for which twenty minutes were allowed proves on closer contact to be a mere crust of loose snow on a knife edge of hard ice, requiring two hours of step cutting and upsetting all calculations. The lack of one hand-hold at a critical spot may make the whole of a carefully-studied rock-face impossible, and compel a complete change of plans. The enemy may have laid an ambush and open fire with a continuous hail of falling stones down a gully which previous telescopic examination had pronounced absolutely safe. The weather may change, and a storm come up suddenly, when the party are barely an hour from the top. Then comes the moment for generalship; then it is for the leader of the party to show his skill in improvising a new route, his determination in pushing on for the summit or pass, as the case may be, or his prudent firmness in deciding to turn back. There can be few better tests of the essential qualities of leadership than a really critical moment on a mountain. The man who can retain his judgment and confidence, and keep up the spirits of his party, when the way has clearly been lost, when all the rocks are coated with new *verglas*, when fingers are numb with cold, and when the guides begin to lose their heads and jabber furiously in incomprehensible *patois*—he is the man who is no less certain to keep his nerve and sustain his subordinates when casualties are heaviest and the hope of support faintest.

Last, but not least, climbing has its value for the soldier as a training in dealing with danger, a better training in that respect than most other sports can afford. The risks incidental to climbing are often ludicrously exaggerated. A week of hot weather is regularly attended in this country by a harvest of bathing fatalities almost as large as the Alpine death-roll in a whole month. Of the accidents which do happen in the mountains, the great majority

are not really accidents at all, but the almost inevitable consequences of ignorance or gross carelessness ; only a very small proportion represent the real dangers inseparable from serious climbing. In any case, it is not the actual danger incurred, but the surmounting and avoiding of danger by the use of skill and judgment, that gives climbing its fascination and its value. The delight of the mountaineer is not in the prospect of sudden death, but in the sub-conscious sense of absolute security and mastery over nature with which he traverses places where the ignorant and inexperienced would meet with certain disaster. No mountaineer gratuitously exposes himself to the chance of an accident, any more than a soldier seeks unnecessary opportunities for getting shot. But in climbing, as in war, though no doubt less frequently, occasions do present themselves when real danger has to be faced and cannot be avoided. There are times when a descent of glazed rocks or the crossing of a stone-swept gully are the only alternatives to something much worse ; and on such an occasion the qualities that make for success in the field have every chance for their exercise. The man who can cut good ice-steps while the rocks fly past him buzzing like angry bees, and visible only when they bound against the sides of the gully, is fit for any place in the line of battle.

Most of the above remarks are fully applicable only to guideless climbing, and guideless climbing is, without a doubt, far the best form of the sport. But guideless climbing is not for the beginner. For him, whether he be a cadet from Sandhurst or a portly colonel from the marble halls of the new War Office, the true policy is to begin climbing with a good guide,—not, for choice, an ambitious youth thirsting to compile a good book of crack ascents, but a seasoned veteran who has done everything, who has taken up many generations of amateur climbers, and

knows how to teach them and how to develop their powers progressively. Let him also avoid the great climbing centres, and practise in quieter valleys, or, better still, move freely from place to place, acquiring the skill in pass work and the general knowledge of mountain country, which are infinitely more useful, from the professional point of view, than the most dazzling record of star peaks. Of the latter, let him do just one or two at the end of the season to put the finishing touch to his holiday—probably also the finishing touch to his finances—and also to furnish a pleasant recollection for the next few months. After two or three summers he and his like can go traversing the Alps together, picking up guides only for occasions of special difficulty. When he has reached that stage he will find climbing not only the most delightful, but also the most inexpensive, of sports, especially if he keeps off the beaten track and well away from mammoth hotels and funicular railways.

I have spoken about the Alps because they are the nearest big mountains, and because they are the normal high school for climbers. But the world is full of excellent mountains, and the British officer has many more opportunities for climbing them than fall to the lot of the stay-at-home civilian. There are still plenty of virgin peaks to be found in the Himalayas, Karakoram, and all the lesser ranges that encompass the confines of India. Even Mount Everest is still unconquered. Now that everybody is taking to going East through Canada—and still more when the 'all-red' line is in operation—the New Zealand Alps or the Rockies will be found to lie extremely handy on the route of the soldier coming home on leave ; and, if the season is wrong for the one, it is duly right for the other. The almost untouched range of the Drakensberg is within easy reach of the Transvaal and Natal garrisons, and even the garrison of Cape Town can console itself

with discovering new ways up Table Mountain, or with the beauties of the Drakenstein or the Hex River Mountains. Last of all, there is abundance of rock-climbing in the British Isles themselves, of snow-climbing, too, if only the season be rightly chosen. Indeed, for that matter the soldier, as mountaineer, should not confine himself to the ordinary resorts and the ordinary climbing season—for one thing, it is not always easy for him to get leave just then. If the weather will not allow of climbing the great Pennine or Oberland peaks, there are mountains all the way from the Tyrol to Styria and the Balkans, where ascents will be possible both earlier and later in the year ; and, if he cannot get away in summer at all, let him go at Christmas and learn to ski. But that is another story.

XI

IMPERIAL PREFERENCE AND IMPERIAL UNITY¹

To sneer at any measure that is calculated to strengthen the material interests which bring the different parts of the Empire into touch with each other as a 'sordid bond,' and to suggest that it derogates from the loftier sentiments that form the real abiding bond of union, betrays a hopelessly narrow outlook and an amazing ignorance of the connection between the forces that bind human society together. The emotions inspired in an Englishman by the Heights of Abraham or in an Australian by Westminster Abbey are not impaired or rendered sordid by any measure which may create or multiply for each of them opportunities for realising those emotions. The bonds of commerce were not reckoned sordid or ineffective by Cobden and Bright, who, indeed, erred on the side of exaggerating their influence. Forgetting the centuries of common intercourse and common interests crystallised in the sentiments of race, of language, and of nationality, they imagined that freedom of international trade, once accepted, would forthwith extirpate all those sentiments, and replace them by the more comprehensive sentiment of a common humanity. They failed to see that the bond of present interest is most effective when it is directed to the reinforcing of existing sentiments. Mutual trade cannot overthrow the barriers between nations. But it can strengthen the ties of union between different races in the

¹ Published in *The Times*, April 15, 1907.

same state ; it can pave the way towards political union between severed and unorganised communities of kindred race and common ideals. The encouragement of mutual trade kept together the union of the American States in its infancy ; it made possible the consummation of political unity in the case of Germany. In our case, the development of mutual interests is required both to hold together the Empire as it exists and to pave the way to the Empire as it ought to be.

There are many ways in which mutual interests between different parts of the Empire, and the interests of each part in the whole, may be promoted. A powerful bond of unity in most states is provided by the professional interests connected with the great administrative services of the State. In the British Empire that bond is almost wholly lacking, owing to the fact that the administrative services of the Empire are practically monopolised by the United Kingdom. The Army, the Navy, the Indian Civil Service, the administration of the Dependencies, the Diplomatic and Consular Service, the Civil Service of the great Imperial departments of State, are recruited almost exclusively from the inhabitants of these islands. Such a state of things cannot fail to be prejudicial to Imperial unity. Not only does it weaken the interest felt by the Colonies in the Empire by depriving colonials of a great range of professional careers open to Englishmen, but it is a constant source of misunderstanding and friction. In this country there exists a very real knowledge of and interest in the administrative side of the Empire, for the simple reason that there is scarcely a family in the upper and middle classes that has not some member—often all its members—in one or other of the Imperial services. But how, for example, can the Colonies be expected to be interested in India, to regard Indian problems from a sympathetic point of view, or to be ready to show a spirit of moderation and

compromise in any conflict of interests or views that may arise between them and India, if they have never been brought into direct touch with Indian administration or come to share the pride in it which almost every Englishman feels? Conversely, too, how can Indian administrators ever come to an intelligent realisation of the difficulties of young communities of white men face to face with such a question as Indian immigration if none of them have ever lived in the colonies affected? It may be suggested that our services are as open to colonial subjects of the King as to those born in this country if they care to pass the necessary tests. That is, no doubt, the theory; but in practice the locality in which the examinations are held, and their adaptation to the convenience of the English educational system, do most effectively exclude colonial competitors. There is, however, one way in which a small handful of colonials does enter the Army and Navy, and that is by the direct nominations given to the graduates of certain colonial military colleges, or to naval cadets selected by their Governments. What is urgently needed is a bold extension of that principle to all the Imperial services, and on a scale that will gradually ensure in them a large proportion of colonial officers and administrators. Such action on the part of the Imperial authorities would not only serve to create in the Colonies a stronger interest, material and sentimental, in the Empire, and thus help to pave the way towards Imperial partnership in the future, but it would also be a very direct recognition of the principle of partnership in the present.

Outside the Imperial administration much could be done by local authorities, whether national, provincial, or municipal, by public institutions and by professional corporations, to stimulate Imperial intercourse by throwing open the professional appointments or facilities within their gift to qualified applicants from every part of the Empire.

But, while only a small portion of the citizens of any part of the Empire can be engaged in administrative or professional work which is likely to bring them into close touch with other parts, the vast majority of the inhabitants of every part of the Empire are, in one way or another, engaged in commerce and industry. The stimulation of mutual commercial intercourse, the development of mutual and common interests in commerce and industry, constitute by far the most effective means of strengthening and sustaining the sentiments of mutual affection and of a common patriotism upon which the existence of the Empire and the furtherance of Imperial unity depend. The desired object may be approached on many lines ; but the principle common to them all is that of giving encouragement or preference to trade within the Empire. Facilities of communication and transportation are essential factors in trade, and much can be done to apply the principle of preference to them. Something, indeed, has already been achieved. Imperial penny postage is an instance of preference that has been established and has already borne its fruits, though on a small scale. In this case a very considerable remission of postal rates was made, not all round, nor in directions where the immediate convenience might have seemed greatest, but to other parts of the Empire, however distant. The object was the promotion of Imperial unity ; but the measure is one that is also bound in the event to prove sound business, for the postal intercourse between citizens of the Empire has in it far greater capacities of expansion than the postal intercourse with foreign nations. Postal facilities within the Empire, however, more especially in the direction of cheaper rates for printed matter, are still susceptible of very great improvement. Something has already been accomplished to promote facility of telegraphic communication between different parts of the Empire, but an enormous amount

yet remains to be done. Shipping subsidies to lines carrying mails and goods between different parts of the Empire is another very important direction in which the principle of preference may be established. Hitherto the British Government in giving subsidies, whether for mail services or for other purposes, has given less consideration to the promoting of intra-Imperial intercourse than to the convenience of such traffic as has happened to be in existence at the moment.

But by far the most effective method of applying the principle of preference, and the easiest in its application, is to show that preference, not in the distribution of revenue through the spending departments, but in the raising of revenue through the collecting departments. In all foreign countries, and in every part of the British Empire except England, and to some extent in India, which is not allowed to control its own fiscal policy, that preference is shown by wholly exempting the trade between citizens from the duties laid upon commercial intercourse between citizens and foreigners. That this does result in a stimulation of intercourse and a strengthening of the sentiment of common interest is indisputable. To take a single instance—there would be practically no trade intercourse whatever between Eastern and Western Canada but for the fact that goods can travel from one end of Canada to another duty free, while they must pay the full duty on crossing the American border. Indeed, but for the Canadian tariff it is doubtful if so long and narrow a strip as inhabited Canada still is could ever have held together. But the principle applies no less, and the results are the same in kind, if somewhat less in degree, when the exemption is only partial. The effects of the preference already granted by Canada to this country for the last ten years are unmistakable. The question of Imperial preference, in the particular aspect of it here

discussed, is not one of free trade or protection in any sense. The main features of the tariff, from which preferential exemptions or reductions are made, need not be altered unless alteration is desirable in itself for national reasons. The question for the moment is merely that of utilising the raising of the revenue in each state of the Empire in such a fashion as to stimulate mutual intercourse as an essential condition for the strengthening of the sentiment of Imperial unity in the individual citizens of the Empire. And it is upon that sentiment that, in the last resort, the existence of the Empire rests.

But the benefits of a policy of Imperial preference are not confined to their moral effect upon the great body of citizens of the Empire. They are even more apparent, in some ways, in their direct bearing upon questions of Imperial policy. A common Imperial policy, to be effective, must presuppose that the general community of interests between the various members of the Empire always largely outweighs the local divergences of interest. But, under the present system, that is very far from being the case, and the divergencies tend to grow steadily wider as the Colonies develop independent economic ambitions. What other result, indeed, could have been expected from a system which was deliberately devised by its promoters with the idea of breaking up the Empire and of 'loosening imperceptibly' the bonds which hold the Colonies to us by 'mistaken notions of self-interest'? If the system has not yet achieved its purpose, it is not because Cobden and Bright were wrong in their conclusions, but only because they underestimated the time required and the strength of the moral and material ties that have managed to hold the Empire together for two generations in spite of their efforts. It would, indeed, be a terrible instance of the irony of history if the results they aimed at, consciously and deliberately, were, after all, brought about by the

sheer intellectual incapacity and moral imbecility of a generation which would regard that same result as the greatest of all national disasters.

Upon Imperial foreign policy and Imperial defence these divergencies exercise an influence which is already seriously hampering and may eventually become paralysing. Foreign policy and military policy are at bottom determined by economic factors. If the whole direction and character of England's economic activities are different from those of the other states of the Empire, how can there ever be an effective foreign policy for the Empire? Hitherto the external economic interests of the Colonies, apart from their trade with England, have not been sufficient to create more than an occasional interruption to the course of a foreign policy which, in the main, has been dictated by the interests of the United Kingdom and of the trade of the United Kingdom, and which has never consciously and deliberately included the fostering and developing of colonial interests in its programme. But such a state of things cannot continue. The occasions on which our policy will be deflected or even completely upset by colonial questions will steadily increase, unless, indeed, we are prepared to disregard colonial interests altogether and face the inevitable catastrophe resulting from such a course. A typical instance of the difficulties in which Imperial foreign policy is involved by our economic system is provided by the recent dispute over the Newfoundland fisheries. The origin of the dispute lay in the failure of the Newfoundland Government to secure a particular commercial treaty with the United States. That treaty was undoubtedly against the interests of the Empire. It specifically excluded preference between the United Kingdom and Newfoundland, and it would have ended in making Newfoundland an economic dependency of the United States. That it failed, in spite of the efforts of our representative at Washington,

was in itself a fortunate circumstance. Yet it would be absurd to blame the Newfoundland Ministry for doing their best for their country under a system which refused to provide for Newfoundland's commercial interests within the Empire. Nor is there any reason to find fault with them for attempting economic reprisals upon the Americans in order to bring them to reason. But their action placed the Foreign Office in a ridiculous difficulty. The whole policy of the Foreign Office has been based on the maintenance of good terms with the United States, a policy, no doubt, eminently sound in itself, but also largely forced upon us by our military weakness—the result of two generations of a system which has allowed the stimulating power of the English market to be devoted to the up-building of a nation of eighty millions along the border of an equally great and equally rich British territory which we might have built up instead, but which through our neglect is only peopled by some six million inhabitants. The task the Foreign Office had to undertake was that of deliberately endangering the whole course of its policy in defence of a local policy initiated by a small colony whose object was not merely unconnected with British interests generally, but actually contrary to them. Need we wonder that negotiations carried on under such conditions were a failure, that the Imperial Government showed itself feeble in dealing with Mr. Root, and irritating and offensive in dealing with the Newfoundland Ministry? Under a system of Imperial preference, on the other hand, Newfoundland would have looked for the development of her trade to the United Kingdom and to Canada, and the difficulty would never have arisen. Such a system, too, by developing the population of Canada, would have enabled the Foreign Office to take up a firmer attitude towards the United States, and to secure better results from any negotiations which might have taken place.

The instance just given was one where the action of a colony tended to involve the Empire in trouble. But what few Englishmen realise is that, as a rule, it has been the policy of England which has tended to involve the Empire. During the last twenty years the Empire has again and again been on the verge of war with one or more of the great European Powers. And, throughout, the cause of danger has not been the defence of any common Imperial interest, but the defence of purely English commercial interests threatened all over the world by the territorial and economic expansion of other Powers. These interests had grown up promiscuously and at haphazard, without any national direction and without any regard to the possibility of their permanent maintenance. Nevertheless, they had become so important proportionately to the whole bulk of our trade that they could not be disregarded. But the essential point to keep in mind is that they were important to the United Kingdom alone, and not to the Colonies. Not only was it unreasonable to expect the Colonies to share in the ever-increasing burden of armaments which the defence of those interests involved, but, from the point of view of the Colonies, it was by no means pleasant to be exposed to the possible danger of hostilities arising from disputes in which they had no interest. The fear of being 'dragged into the vortex of British militarism,' so often expressed in the Colonies and so genuinely entertained in many quarters, is really only a confused and illogical expression of a very real and justifiable apprehension of being burdened with armaments and dragged into wars in defence of interests which are not the interests of the Colonies. If the interests threatened had been large colonial interests, it is not unlikely that all the militarism and all the aggressiveness would have been on the colonial side, while the Imperial Government would have devoted its main energies to the futile and unpopular

task of acting as mediator between part of the Empire and a foreign state. If we want the Colonies to bear their proper share in the burden of Imperial defence we must see to it that the interests which our armaments exist to defend are mainly common interests, and that such separate interests as will inevitably continue to exist are secondary to the common interests and are worth defending for their sake. It is easy for Canada and the United Kingdom to concert diplomatic and military measures for the common defence of the trade between them ; it is not so easy to concert measures for the common defence of the United Kingdom's trade with the Argentine and Canada's trade with Germany. Here, too, Imperial preference, by increasing the proportion and total volume of intra-Imperial trade as compared with the foreign trade of each particular unit of the Empire, will enormously facilitate the working of the existing Imperial departments and help to pave the way towards partnership.

So far account has only been taken of the qualitative changes which economic regulation—of which trade preference is by far the most important form—can create in the moral attitude of the peoples of the Empire towards each other and towards the Empire as a whole, and in the political conditions required to make partnership workable. But there is a no less important aspect of economic regulation, the quantitative one. We have so far considered trade only as a means of bringing the citizens of the Empire into contact and harmonising divergences of interest between the different states of the Empire. But commerce and industry have also a stimulating and creative aspect. A market does not only mean profits for individuals who buy and sell goods in it. It means the creation of populations who live by producing and consuming the goods there bought and sold. In the past sixty years, under the system of free trade, England has

created, through her market, a population numbering now at the least fifty or sixty million souls ; and she has created them almost entirely in foreign countries. The middle west of the United States, the Argentine, great industrial regions of Germany and France, to give but a few instances, are peopled by millions who would never have come into existence but for the British market. An intelligent direction of the creative power of that market for national and Imperial ends would have created and supported the bulk of that vast population under the British flag. The science of population, the knowledge of how to build up the greatest population at the highest level of well-being and efficiency, is the foundation of statesmanship. Judged by that standard, how miserable appears the result achieved by British statesmanship in the Empire ; how petty compared with the far greater result accomplished with smaller resources by the United States. The creative power of our market, the great stream of our emigrating man-power, has for two generations been allowed to dissipate itself upon the world at large, and has been irrevocably lost. But our territories and their resources still remain, and, if we seize the occasion while it is still ours we can yet build up on them the population and the national strength which alone can make the Empire secure. We shall have lost two generations in the race of nations, but nothing more.

The result of our dissipation of energy outside the Empire has been to leave the Colonies almost unpeopled. Their population straggles thinly over vast areas, their realised and available wealth is comparatively small, and is urgently needed for internal development. They cannot afford to contribute, either in men or in money, the share in the burden of Empire that the defence of their interests or their territory may demand. What can Canada do to-day for the defence of her four thousand miles of frontier ? What

will Australia and New Zealand be capable of doing in the near future adequate to the maintenance of Imperial interests in the Pacific? The fault is not theirs, but ours, who have left them to be weak when we might have made them strong. The difficulty in the way of effective defensive partnership, which our negligence and short-sightedness has created, exists no less in the way of Imperial partnership generally. That partnership must be based on the principle of equality. Yet that equality must be unreal as long as the actual disparity in wealth and population remains as great as it is. The development of the Colonies by Imperial preference is essential to giving them the strength and power to assume the responsibility and burden of Empire on an equal footing.

There is yet one last aspect of the policy of Imperial preference on its quantitative side. It is not only a policy of stimulating the Colonies, but also a policy of stimulating and maintaining the industrial strength of the Mother Country. That industrial strength has declined enormously of recent years, judged by the only standard that can be taken into consideration when dealing with political issues, the standard of comparison with the productive output of other nations, and is declining more rapidly every year. Yet it is upon that industrial strength that the main burden of the defence of the Empire, the maintenance of sea-power, and the defence of the land frontiers of the Empire must fall for the next generation. To develop and stimulate the industrial strength of England in every way is one of the most essential provisional measures for the preservation of the Empire. And here, too, Imperial preference—aided, no doubt, by a saner national economic policy—furnishes the only means adequate to the object in view.

In one way or another the policy of Imperial preference—and that policy includes every form of preference, preference in Customs duties, preference in navigation, state-aided

migration—provides the indispensable key for every approach towards the great goal of Imperial unity. It can strengthen the bonds of interest and sentiment; it can harmonise divergences of interest, and so create the political conditions for successful co-operation; it can give the national strength which will enable the Colonies to take their place ultimately as equal bearers of the burden and equal sharers in the power and the pride of place; lastly, it can give the people of these little islands a renewed vitality and industrial power which will enable them to preserve the Empire intact while the main burden and responsibility of its defence still rests upon them. Small and useful steps towards Imperial partnership may be made during the next few years, even if preference should not be achieved. But that Imperial unity should be achieved and permanently secured without the help of Imperial preference, and on any other basis, is almost unthinkable. The free trade system, as at present established in England, and the British Empire are, in the long run, two incompatible things—as they were meant to be from the first. It is for those who think they believe in both ideals to decide which they must forego.

XII

PREFERENCE AS A PRINCIPLE¹

IMPERIAL preference, in one form or another, is essential as a recognition by each part of the Empire that it owes something to every other part of the Empire—that it cannot, in commerce, any more than in any other aspect of national life, treat nations or communities under the British flag as if that flag had no meaning. Imperial preference to-day is, first and foremost, a matter of sentiment and of political principle, and not of economic theory. Of political principle, because it is simply the principle of Imperial unity in its economic aspect. A believer in Imperial unity may, on the question of economic theory, be either a free trader or a protectionist. He may hope for complete free trade, internal and external, throughout the Empire. He may strive to secure the greatest practicable measure of free trade, naturally aiming, first of all, at internal free trade, and, secondly, at external free trade. On the other hand, he may be a protectionist, and believe in the advantage, not only of protection for the Empire as a whole against the outside world, but also of a certain measure of internal protection between unequally developed portions of the Empire. But no Imperialist, in any real sense of the word, no one who ‘thinks Imperially,’ can justify the pursuit by any one part of the Empire of any economic policy, whether free trade or protectionist, which absolutely disregards the existence of the rest of the Empire. Yet that is precisely the character of the policy which this

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country has pursued for sixty years, and, as far as it was able, has forced upon the rest of the Empire. It was a policy introduced, not merely without regard for the responsibility of Empire, but with the disruption of the Empire as its clearly avowed object. And for that very reason the reversal of that policy, by some tangible recognition of Imperial unity, has become a matter of sentiment to Imperialists in this country, and still more to those in the Empire outside. It has of late been the fashion of the opponents of Imperial preference to dwell much upon the bonds of sentiment that unite the younger nations to the Mother Country. Yet what greater offence to that sentiment can be given than is conveyed in a blank refusal to modify, in the very slightest degree, or for however valuable consideration, a policy which was meant to be the instrument of disruption, and which, in the eyes of the younger nations, has always stood as the insolent symbol of our indifference to their welfare ?

It is for the recognition of a principle that our fellow-citizens across the seas are pressing. It is a principle they have never lost sight of, because they have never wholly despaired of the ideal of Imperial unity. Throughout the dark and dreary age that lies behind us, thinkers and statesmen like Joseph Howe, John Macdonald, and Cecil Rhodes kept that ideal before them, and contended for the economic principle bound up with it. For twenty years past, with ever-growing insistence, the younger nations have urged that principle upon the Mother Country. Their suggestions were met at the outset with contemptuous indifference, and seemed fruitless, till a happy combination of local circumstances inspired Sir Wilfrid Laurier, ten years ago, with the idea of giving effect to the principle in Canada without waiting for its reciprocation here. His action, coming at a fortunate time, quickened the movement in the Empire to real life. Canada's example has been

followed by the other Dominions, and has, through the conversion of Mr. Chamberlain, set on foot a movement in this country which has already captured one of the great historic parties in the State, and is growing in strength every day. That movement, indeed, aims at the complete reversal of the established economic system of this country, and at the framing of a comprehensive scheme of Imperial preference extending far beyond the limits of our narrow list of duties. With that aim the assembled Prime Ministers are undoubtedly in sympathy, and they have again and again expressed their readiness to support it by giving 'concession for concession,' to use the phrase employed by Sir Wilfrid Laurier a few days ago. But they have come over both as practical politicians who fully understand the position of the present Government of this country, and as the representatives of self-governing Dominions who recognise the right of each part of the Empire to decide for itself alike the broad general lines and the specific details of its economic policy. They neither claim the right to press for a complete reversal of our fiscal system, beyond showing what advantages they can give us if we put ourselves in a position in which we can reciprocate them, nor do they expect such a reversal from the present Government as a result of their arguments. But what they do press for, and what they have a right to expect, is some concession which, consistently with the general fiscal policy of our Government, shall yet convey to the Empire at large a clear recognition on our part of the principle of Imperial economic co-operation.

Is it conceivable that our Government can meet the other Governments with an absolute refusal on the question of principle at this time of day, when the desirability, the necessity, of Imperial co-operation is recognised by every party in the State? On what grounds could they justify such a refusal? The 'mandate' of the last

general election at any rate affords no such justification. In the first place, there is no such thing in our politics as a final and conclusive mandate. Elections are not trials in the Supreme Court in which cases are settled finally and irrevocably. They are influenced by many considerations, and afford, at the most, a general authorisation given by a majority to the exponents of certain views to essay the task of government. No election mandate can, in the slightest degree, modify the absolute responsibility of a Government to the country as a whole for the policy it may pursue, or exempt it from the necessity of justifying and defending that policy on its merits at every stage. Least of all can it affect the responsibility of a Government dealing, not with its own supporters or critics, but with other Governments. But, in any case, what was the precise nature of the mandate that is supposed to have been given on the issue of Imperial preference, when we disentangle it from the various other mandates which combined to create the majority of the present Government? At the most it was a mandate against the introduction of a protectionist tariff, and against the reimposition of a corn duty for the sake of Imperial preference. Preferential reduction confined to existing duties was neither advocated authoritatively on the Unionist side nor combated by the supporters of the present Government. The posters extolling the blessings of the cheap loaf in no case called attention to the blessings of highly taxed tea, sugar, or tobacco. The question of preference between the self-governing Dominions of the Empire and those Dependencies whose fiscal policy is at present wholly controlled by England was never so much as mentioned. In fact, the broad principle of preference was not at issue at the last election, nor can any one say that the nation has rejected that principle, even if it may have thought the price to be paid for a certain specific application of it too high.

More than that: the general principle of Imperial preference has, since the general election, been openly and authoritatively blessed by Government spokesmen. Mr. Churchill has on more than one occasion declared that the Government favours the extension of preference in the Empire wherever feasible. It is true that he confined the scope of that preference to those states of the Empire which are 'tariff states.' But India and the Crown Colonies are tariff states even if their tariffs are imposed with a view to revenue only, and foster no native industry. A preferential treaty between Canada and the West Indies would be eagerly welcomed on both sides—it would have been established fifty years ago but for the veto of the British Government.¹ Will the British Government veto such a treaty now, and, if so, on what grounds? Will it assert, at this stage in our constitutional development, the right of the United Kingdom to impose its fiscal views upon a Dependency, not only against the wishes of the Dependency itself, but also against the wishes of the other partner nations? As a matter of fact, the Colonial Office has already sanctioned, not only preference, but protection, in the case of its South African Dependencies. Basutoland, for instance, is a member of the South African Customs Convention, which not only gives a preference to British goods, but gives the agricultural produce of Basutoland substantial protection in the Johannesburg market. A clear and explicit declaration that in future neither the Colonial Office nor the India Office will place any obstacle in the way of a Dependency whose administrators may desire to introduce the principle of preference in their tariffs is one of the very least concessions that the Conference has a right to insist upon.

But is not the United Kingdom also a tariff state? It

¹ A treaty of mutual preference between Canada and the West Indies has now been arranged, and will shortly be in operation.

undoubtedly has a Customs tariff, one which ranges from twenty-five per cent. to three hundred per cent. *ad valorem* on the goods which it taxes. It raises by that tariff a larger amount of taxation per head of its people than any other great country in the world. The inhabitants of this country pay 12s. 2d. a head in indirect taxes, as against 11s. 8d. a head credited to the over-taxed Americans, and 8s. 2d. credited to the hapless and downtrodden Germans. It is true that this tariff is framed in accordance with the strictest tenets of the Cobdenite creed. Every penny of the taxation raised by it is paid by the British consumer. There is no attempt, as there is elsewhere, to force the foreign producer to pay the duty by stimulating the competition of home producers against him. It is carefully devised so that in no possible instance—apart from the chocolate duties—can a single British manufacturer or working man be encouraged or helped by it. Yet, admitting these great merits, the fact has still to be acknowledged that it remains an exceedingly high tariff, and that it falls almost entirely upon articles which constitute the practical necessities and the everyday little luxuries of the poorer classes. Is it impossible to amend that tariff in the interests of those classes? In his Budget speech Mr. Asquith referred with touching eloquence to two figures in our community whose appeal is irresistible, whose cry for help could not be passed by with folded arms—the figure of underfed childhood, and the figure of poverty-stricken age—and expressed the hope that he would be able to unfold his arms another year. Was it really impossible for him to do something to respond to those appeals this year by diminishing the burden of taxation which falls with exceptional weight on just these two classes? Sugar is not only an ordinary necessity of life in this country, whose inhabitants consume on an average a quarter of a pound of it every day. It is more especially a physiological need of growing childhood, a

need which is displayed in the instinctive and almost insatiable craving of children for sweet things. It is more sugar, more jam, more puddings that, in most cases, these underfed children need, and not more dry bread. Yet sugar is taxed over thirty per cent. Tea and tobacco are the chief, in many cases almost the only, solace of the old age of the poor. Tea and tobacco are the two things of which they can rarely afford to buy as much as they want, and of which a present from charitable friends is most valued. Yet the poor man's tea is taxed over one hundred per cent., and his tobacco three hundred per cent. Would not a present reduction of these duties be a far better way of meeting the appeals which move Mr. Asquith so deeply than promises of future legislation? Mr. Asquith explained that his surplus was insufficient to allow any large reduction of these duties, and dwelt on the inconveniences of a small reduction such as a penny off the tea-duty or a farthing off sugar. Would not a preferential reduction of the existing duties to the rest of the Empire meet these very difficulties? Except as regards tea it would not involve any great loss of revenue in the immediate future, while its effect in reducing prices by stimulating new competition against the foreign producer would be much greater and more immediate. Moreover, such a reduction would bring with it, what no general reduction can bring, a corresponding preference in return—in other words, more employment, enabling parents to feed their children, sons to provide for their aged parents, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer to reap more revenue without raising his taxes. Is it conceivable that a British Government will flatly refuse to take a step which would lighten the burden of existing taxation, and secure more employment for our people, simply because that step also involves a recognition of the principle of Imperial unity?

On the merits of the case there is no valid objection that

free traders can urge against the preferential reduction of non-protective duties, now existing or to be imposed at any future time. The real objection that free traders entertain to preference in this form is lest it should by degrees extend to preference in the form of reductions from duties gradually acquiring a protective character. What they dread is what, in the current phrase, is known as the thin end of the wedge. The dread is in this instance purely illogical. * If our existing high tariff has never been allowed to acquire a protective character, why should reductions in that tariff tend to make it protective, as far, at least, as our own producers are concerned? It may, indeed, act protectively as regards the Colonial producers. But if that is an injury to the Colonies, it is an injury which they are only too anxious to have inflicted upon them. And if it is, in one sense, an encouragement to their protectionism, it will be counterbalanced by the greater measure of free trade which they are pledged to give us in return.

Is it not too late, in any case, for this country to talk of the thin end of the wedge and the necessity of keeping out even the slightest taint of protectionism? We accepted protection ten years ago when we accepted the Canadian preference. The benefit to us of that preference is incontestable, and is now universally admitted. Yet the whole of that benefit practically has lain not in the fact that Canada reduced her duties, but in the fact that she reduced them to us and not to our competitors—in other words, that we have enjoyed protection in the Canadian market as against the American and the German. Can anybody seriously suggest that a general reduction of the Canadian tariff to the level of the preferential tariff would not be a crushing blow to our trade with Canada? Is not even a partial reduction of that tariff to an intermediate scale likely to cause serious injury to part at least of that trade?

What applies to the Canadian preference applies no less to the other preferences that have been given us. Protection in the Colonial market has already in the last few years become a vital interest of some of our great industries, and to-day contributes no inappreciable fraction of our total revenue. There is no question of avoiding the thin end of the wedge, or of escaping the taint of protection. The wedge is well planted in our industrial system, the taint is strongly upon it. It is for our Government, if it really holds to the free trade doctrine, to get rid of that taint. Are Lord Elgin and Mr. Asquith prepared to urge the Prime Ministers assembled at the Conference to abandon these protective preferences which, according to free trade theory, can only diminish the enterprise of our manufacturers, divert our labour and capital into less remunerative artificial channels, and incidentally inflict unnecessary hardship on Colonial consumers? Dare they come before any audience in the United Kingdom—outside of a private meeting of the Cobden Club—and make such a suggestion? If not, then they do accept protection for their people, and admit its advantages. But accepting substantial protection, as we do, at the hands of our fellow-citizens in the Empire, can we have the effrontery to refuse to give some slight return by a measure which involves no alteration in the general character of our tariff, for no other reason than that we fear the taint of protection which it may introduce? Would not the assembled Prime Ministers have every right to say to our Government: ‘You dread the spread of protection; let us, by abolishing our preferences, free you from the taint that you find so odious; let us restore to your merchants and manufacturers the energy and enterprise which our misguided protection has dulled, so that they may once more revive under the bracing and encouraging influence of bringing their wares to closed doors; let us send back your workmen to those abundant

and glorious opportunities for well-paid employment from which in our mistaken friendship we seduced them ? ' And they might add : ' Why should we abandon a single local prejudice, why should we incur a single responsibility, or add a farthing to our taxation, for the sake of Imperial unity, when you rate that unity so low that, for no better reason than disbelief in your own power to arrest an economic movement which is going on in your country, if once you make the slightest alteration in your fiscal system, you refuse to make even the most formal concession to a principle which we at least believe to be an essential element in Imperial unity ? '

It has been suggested, indeed, that a preference on existing duties would be valueless to the Colonies, and that view would seem to be supported to some extent by a recent memorandum issued by the Tariff Commission, showing how small, apart from tea, is the actual quantity of dutiable goods at present imported from the Empire. But that is no reason against the recognition of the principle of preference which the Colonies have a right to demand, though it may well be a reason why they should not give very substantial additional concessions in return. But, as a matter of fact, the benefit which preference, even on so small a scale, would afford is not to be measured by the present trade, but by its potentialities. A reduction on tea would mainly benefit the great bulk of the consumers in this country, at the expense of a few who have special tastes in tea, and would benefit India and Ceylon mainly by increasing the consumption. But a reduction on coffee and sugar might very soon mean renewed prosperity to the much-suffering West Indies, and development in many other tropical portions of the Empire. India, South Africa, and Australia, not to speak of Ireland, would all benefit by a reduction on tobacco. Australia and Cape Colony would soon expand their wine industries in response

to preference. A remission of the dried fruit duty would in some slight degree benefit every single part of the Empire.

The one objection that carries any real weight to preference on existing duties is that Canada and New Zealand cannot expect to benefit by it to any great extent. That is an undoubted objection from the point of view of the tariff reformer who wishes to develop the principle of preference to its fullest possible extent. But it is not an objection from the point of view of the Imperialist who simply wishes to see an Imperial principle recognised. And it is the recognition of a principle and not equality of treatment that the Colonies are asking for. They can always, if they want, secure that equality by making their preference correspond to what they receive under our preference. If our tariff does not admit of a preference which will materially benefit Canada or New Zealand, then Canada and New Zealand may well rest satisfied with the preferences they have already given us, and wait patiently till either a change in our fiscal system, or a mere extension of revenue duties, without any such change, brings their opportunity. As a matter of fact, a corn duty of one shilling or even two shillings a quarter would in no sense be a protective tax as far as British agriculture is concerned; and, but for the extraordinary and unreasoning prejudice worked up against it, is one of the most natural and obvious forms of revenue tax which can be applied. But if a corn duty is out of the question for the present Government, there still remain other products on which a revenue duty could be imposed whose reduction would benefit Canada and New Zealand, as well as some of the other Colonies. Butter and cheese, for instance, are not more necessary in the daily life of the poorer classes than sugar or tea. A cheese duty with a remission to the Colonies would, as a matter of fact, leave the working man, who already mainly eats

Canadian cheese, unaffected, and only tax the consumer of Gruyère and Camembert for the benefit of Canada and for the sake of the employment Canada will give to our workmen. Nor would a butter duty which let in Australian, Canadian, and New Zealand butter free be likely to raise the price of the working man's butter—still less of his margarine—to any appreciable extent.

Nobody can well ask for a far-reaching scheme of Imperial preference from the present Government of the United Kingdom. But some recognition, however slight, of the principle of reciprocity, some readiness to respond to the rest of the Empire, at any rate on the issue of sentiment which is involved in preference, is essential unless the Conference is to be the failure that Sir Wilfrid Laurier declared it must not be. A formal declaration of the right of India and the other Imperial dependencies to include the principle of preference in their tariffs, an undertaking to give preference on our existing duties, and a promise to consider carefully the possibility of a future extension of revenue duties in such a way that every part of the Empire may be benefited by the preferences given—that, stated briefly, is the *minimum* recognition of the principle of Imperial reciprocity which the present Conference has a right to expect from a Government pledged to maintain the general principle of free trade in the fiscal system of this country. If our Government refuse to concede even that *minimum*, the responsibility they will incur, both to the Empire and to the working classes of this country, will be a very heavy one.

XIII

SOUTH AFRICA AND IMPERIAL PREFERENCE¹

IN discussing the policy of Imperial preference two points must always be kept in view. The first is that preference is a policy of reciprocal benefit. The second is that it is not a static but a cumulative policy. It means not merely that England should take a certain more or less fixed amount of wheat, for instance, from Canada, and Canada, in return, take a similar more or less fixed amount of manufactures from England, but that England, in buying wheat from Canada, will be increasing the quantity of manufactures Canada can buy from her, and Canada in buying manufactures from England will strengthen the purchasing power of the market to which she ships her wheat. It is a process of mutual economic acceleration. The only possible check upon it, and that a very partial and eventually diminishing one, is the desire for local protection in the different parts of the Empire. The process itself could only come to a stop when every part of the Empire had reached the utmost limit of its capacities for economic development. And that stage we may safely assume to be still some centuries ahead.

There is no part of the Empire where the cumulative and accelerating effect of the mutual benefits conferred by preference would be shown more strikingly than in South Africa. South Africa is a country of immense agricultural possibilities, hitherto undeveloped, owing to lack of enter-

¹ Published in *The Times*, May 24, 1910.

prise, ignorance of the real capacities of the soil when properly worked, defective transport facilities, absence of a national organisation of trade, and, last but not least, want of population and of capital. Since the war new blood and a new spirit have been infused into the farming population ; agricultural research departments, scientifically organised and manned by enthusiasts, have proved what the South African soil and climate can do ; railways have been extended in every direction ; the old conflicts and jealousies have been merged in national unity and in a desire for national development. All that South Africa now wants is more population and more capital for agricultural development. The best stimulus and guarantee to furnish these is the prospect of an assured market for South African products, and it is precisely that prospect which Imperial preference can offer to South Africa.

What has Imperial preference, in its relation to South Africa, to offer to the United Kingdom ? In the first place, the elimination of an increasingly serious foreign competition in what is already one of the most valuable of markets for British industry. In the second place, an enormous expansion of that market, an expansion which, for a generation to come, is unlikely to be seriously interfered with by the growth of local protection. South Africa has great industrial potentialities. She abounds in minerals and raw materials of every sort. But with her agricultural possibilities undeveloped, with the dearth and insufficiency of skilled labour, with her greatest existing industry, gold mining, based on an extremely narrow margin of profits over working costs, South Africa can have no room for a thoroughgoing protectionist policy for many years to come. When her land is full of white people, when skilled white labour is abundant, when the cost of living has been brought down by general development, then the time will come for the vigorous industrial

exploitation within the country of her coal and iron and copper, of her wool and fibres and other raw materials. Then the rate of expansion of British trade with South Africa may decline, though the actual expansion, by then grown to proportions undreamt of to-day, will, we believe, still continue.

It was Mr. Asquith who, in a recent speech, selected South Africa as his instance of a part of the Empire which would receive no benefits under Imperial preference. South Africa, according to Mr. Asquith, has no other products than wool and ostrich feathers, which are raw materials and therefore outside the scope of the policy of preference as laid down by Mr. Chamberlain. Assuming that a British Prime Minister, and more especially a Liberal Prime Minister, is entitled to be as ignorant as he pleases about economic conditions in other parts of the Empire, still might not Mr. Asquith have at least reflected upon certain facts that could not have escaped thrusting themselves upon his purview as a politician? Is his memory so short that he has forgotten that both Mr. Hofmeyr and Mr. Rhodes wanted preference for South Africa and for the Empire? Are the preferential resolutions of the Imperial Conference of 1907, endorsed by all the South African representatives, already blotted from his mind, and has he no dim recollection of the fact that the very argument that South Africa could not gain under preference was used by him at that Conference and effectively refuted by Dr. Jameson? However, the object of this article is not to discuss—*longum erat*—the Prime Minister's invincible ignorance in these matters, but to deal with the actual scope of the policy of preference in South Africa.

There is one branch of South African agriculture which formerly flourished under preference, which was destroyed by Cobdenism, and which might well revive again to even more than its old prosperity under preference in the future.

That is the wine industry. In the 'fifties of last century the Cape used to export nearly 1,000,000 gallons of wine a year, of an average value of over £130,000. That trade was almost wiped out when the Cobden Treaty in 1860 not only abolished the preference to South Africa, but practically gave an artfully veiled preference to France instead. The average annual export to England for the four years before the treaty took effect was 725,000 gallons. For the next four years it was 75,000 gallons, a drop of nearly 90 per cent. In South Africa, as in Canada, British Cobdenism produced widespread distress, checked a promising development, and was responsible for no small measure of disaffection—disaffection whose consequences in South Africa may well have played a contributory part in the troubles which finally culminated in the war. Meanwhile, the wine and spirit industry, after a long period of stagnation, has shown considerable signs of revival. The growth of Johannesburg and other towns has provided a home market, and of late years Dr. Jameson's Government took a keen interest in improving the character of the industry. Many of the South African wines to-day are of excellent quality, and deserve, even under present conditions, a much better market in this country than they have as yet managed to secure. With anything in the nature of preference South Africa ought to be able to capture a very substantial portion of the £3,000,000 worth of wine and brandy which this country imports every year. With a large market, and consequently with more capital at their disposal, South African growers could afford to spend more on the selection and maturing of their vintages, and South African wine might in time compete with foreign wine not only in the commoner and medium, but also in the best qualities.

What is true of wine is equally true of tobacco. Though South Africa cannot hope, at any rate for the present,

to compete in the very finest qualities of cigars and cigarettes, it can produce excellent ordinary cigarettes, both American and Turkish, and pipe tobacco fully equal to the bulk of that imported into this country. Here again preference would not only secure for South Africa, and more particularly for Rhodesia, a large proportion, possibly as much as one-half, of our present importation of some £3,000,000 worth of unmanufactured tobacco, but would lead to a great improvement in quality. In the case both of wine and tobacco, preference, it may be remarked in passing, would be by the partial remission of duties and would be accompanied by a direct reduction of cost to the consumer. The same is also true of raisins, currants, and other dried fruits, of which South Africa, with a little encouragement, could easily become a large producer. In the matter of fresh fruit, such as grapes, peaches, apricots, fancy plums, oranges, and lemons, of which we import some £3,500,000 worth from foreign countries, South Africa possesses a considerable advantage in being in the Southern Hemisphere and so having her season when fruit is scarcest in Europe. She has already won a very respectable position in our market, but that position would be enormously improved by preference, even if the actual preference were so small as only to serve as an advertisement.

All the above-mentioned items, however, are quite subsidiary to maize and its by-products. When Mr. Chamberlain first opened his campaign for preference he excluded maize from its scope on the assumption that it was not a product grown on any large scale in the Empire. As a matter of fact, the climate of South Africa is ideally suited to maize, as the dry sunny autumn makes it possible to leave the cobs to dry and complete their ripening on the stalk, and avoids the need for kiln-drying, which is habitual in America. The production and export of maize has

already increased very largely in the last few years, thanks to the action of the South African governments in quoting low uniform through rates from the farm to London, and in seeing to the proper grading of the grain. The export of maize in 1909 was £665,596, as compared with £207,718 in the previous year. But the increase hitherto is nothing to what the increase may become, thanks to the researches of the agricultural departments started by Lord Milner, which have proved that practically the whole of the veld, which was once reckoned only fit for grazing, will grow heavy crops of maize if ploughed and worked up in the proper way. But the new cultivation requires both more farmers and more capital, and the value of preference will lie in its power of attracting these two necessary factors out to South Africa. The United Kingdom imports something like £14,000,000 worth of maize a year. With even a small preference there is no reason why South Africa should not in a few years capture the great bulk of this trade.

But the possibilities of the 'mealie,' to use the familiar South African name, are far from exhausted by the mere export of grain. The whole middle-west of the United States lives off maize—maize which it turns into bacon and beef and dairy produce, into turkeys, geese, fowls and eggs, into hides and leather and a score of other by-products. Of these various articles we import roughly £80,000,000 worth a year from foreign countries, all of which could be supplied by the Empire, and out of which South Africa could hope some day to secure a very considerable fraction.

In one way or another preference would mean to South Africa an increase of from £10,000,000 to £20,000,000 a year to her annual export in the next ten years, and a further increase of perhaps even twice that amount in the following decade. But that increase of exports directly

due to preference would have many other collateral results. The general stimulus to agriculture, the influx of fresh capital and new men, and the lower freights made possible by a big export traffic, would enormously increase the export of other South African products such as wool, mohair, and hides, which might not enjoy any direct preference. The growth of agriculture, again, would create a subsidiary home market for itself in the growth of the market towns, and the whole process of development would create conditions under which a greater development of mining, and the inception of new industries hitherto untouched, might become possible. Preference would, in fact, raise the whole economic life of South Africa on to a new plane, which in its turn might prove the starting-point of undreamt of developments.

The economic effects of preference will be accompanied by political effects no less important. Preference will give every class in South Africa and every section a direct interest in the Empire. It will mean a large and progressive British immigration into South Africa, especially on to the land, and thus obliterate that coincidence of the racial division with the division between town and country which alone can keep up the old feuds and the old misunderstandings. Most important of all for the future, it will so entirely modify the proportion between the white and native populations in South Africa as to upset the old traditional system under which all unskilled work must be done by black men, and afford a starting-point for a true white labour policy—at present still largely in the clouds—which alone can make South Africa, in any real sense of the words, a ‘white man’s country.’ In South Africa, as everywhere else in the Empire, preference is not merely a policy of profit and loss. It is a policy of development and consolidation, of union not only between different portions of the Empire, but also between different portions

of the same territory and different sections of the same community. Here as elsewhere it is the key to the whole Imperial problem.

Let us now turn to the question of what South Africa can do for England under preference. Even under existing conditions South Africa is a valuable and expanding market, thanks mainly to the development of the mining industry. The imports into South Africa rose from an annual average of just over £8,000,000 in the period 1885-89 to over £13,000,000 in 1890-94, and to £23,000,000 for 1895-99. The war and reconstruction period 1900-1904 led to a tremendous inflation up to an average of £38,000,000, falling to £28,000,000 for 1905-9. The lowest year of the period was 1908, with a total of £24,438,266. Since then there has been a marked revival. The figures for 1909 were £2,500,000 better than those for 1908, and those of the present year (1910) are even more encouraging. The first two months have already shown an increase of £1,155,000 over the corresponding months of 1909, and if the average is kept up the total South African import for 1910 ought to exceed £34,000,000. Even without preference to stimulate expansion the import trade of South Africa will soon reach an average of £40,000,000 ;¹ with preference that figure would before long be increased by 50, perhaps even 100 per cent. And it is a trade of which the great bulk can and ought to be done by the United Kingdom.

This was actually the case less than twenty years ago. For the period 1885-94 the British share of the import trade of South Africa was 78 per cent. But the next few years saw a very rapid decline. For 1895-99 it was 64 per cent., and for 1900-4 63 per cent. In March 1903 a conference of all the South African colonies sat at Bloemfontein to frame a South African tariff. That tariff included a substantial preference to the United Kingdom

¹ Imports for 1911, £36,400,000.

amounting to 25 per cent. of the duty in most cases and to a total remission in others. The tariff was revised in 1906 and a general rebate of 3 per cent. *ad valorem* on all dutiable goods substituted for the 25 per cent. reduction of the duty. As the average of the duties was only about 9 per cent. *ad valorem*, this alteration constituted a decided increase in the preference on many items. At the same time the preference was extended to Canada, Australia, and subsequently to New Zealand.

The precise effect of the preference thus granted is not altogether easy to determine. The total amount of rebate granted to the British Empire, amounting to £486,331 in 1909, is by no means inconsiderable, and can hardly have failed to produce some effect. South African contracts are large, and a small percentage of difference may represent a very considerable sum. In certain individual items, such as cement, agricultural implements, and candles, the effect has been very clearly marked. In many respects the effect was even more direct and striking in encouraging the displacement of foreign foodstuffs by Imperial, more particularly Australian, imports, though the total importation of this class of products has diminished very rapidly owing to the development of South African agriculture. All the same, the general movement of British trade cannot be said to have responded in any very marked fashion. The percentage of British imports fell in the period 1905-9 to 57 per cent., showing a revival towards the end of the period from 56·2 in 1908 to 58·1 in 1909 and 59·7 for the first two months of 1910. The following table shows the movement in certain classes of goods in which the United Kingdom is specially interested and has a specially strong position—viz. apparel, cotton piece goods, haberdashery, hats and caps, boots and shoes, condensed milk, cutlery, bar and corrugated iron, iron pipes, and mining machinery :—

IMPORTS	1907	1908	1909
Total	£6,891,398	£6,767,517	£7,977,942
From United Kingdom .	£5,744,675	£5,679,116	£6,481,130
Percentage	84	84	81

The drop in the percentage between 1907 and 1909 was most marked in mining machinery, 74 to 70; cutlery, 75 to 70; bar iron, 84 to 80; corrugated iron, 98 to 94.

In considering the somewhat uncertain indications given by the above figures it is necessary to remember that our foreign rivals, notably Germany, enjoy very substantial advantages over British trade in several respects. In the first place, they each have a considerable body of Consuls and Consular agents distributed over the face of the country whose main, and almost sole, object is the promotion of their country's trade by every means in their power. It is only in the last two years that the British Government has been roused to the necessity of having a few agents in the Dominions to help British trade. The push and energy of Mr. R. Sothorn Holland, the Board of Trade Commissioner in South Africa, have in all probability contributed effectively towards the noticeable increase in the proportion of British to total trade since his appointment. But, even so, the work needs a far larger staff and a larger expenditure of money than any yet contemplated, if it is to put our people on an equality in this respect with the Germans and Americans.

There are two other advantages enjoyed by our rivals, notably the Germans, which go far to neutralise the existing preference. The one is the system of Government-aided through railway and shipping rates, and the other the close co-operation between the big German banks and German industries. The through rate is, indeed, a most

valuable help to the German export trade. It is of immense convenience to exporters, enabling them to quote delivery prices with much greater ease, and in the particular case of Germany it constitutes a very substantial preference on the cost of shipment. Nominally the German ships in the South African Shipping Ring are not allowed to quote lower rates from Hamburg than from London. But the through rate makes no subdivision between railway and shipping charges, and it is impossible to discover what private arrangement between the shipping company and the Government lies behind an arrangement which on the face of it involves the latter in substantial loss in railway revenue. There is no reason why the through-rate system should not be organised as between the shipping and railway companies in England, and, indeed, it could be done even more effectively than the Germans can do it by securing the co-operation of the South African Government railways, rates being quoted from any point in England to any point in South Africa, and special measures being taken by the South African railways to meet any rate-cutting by foreign competitors.

The co-operation of the German banks with German trade has been effective for many years. Most of the machinery required for those mines on the Rand which are under the control of the Deutsche Bank or Dresdner Bank has habitually been ordered from the German manufacturers who are also financed by the same institutions. A most striking instance of this occurred recently, when the Deutsche and Dresdner Banks agreed to finance the Victoria Falls and Transvaal Power Company, and its subsidiary company, on condition that the orders for the greater part of the machinery should be placed in Germany. It is high time, if British traders and financiers wish to hold their own in the markets of the world, for them to learn the meaning of the German proverb : *eine Hand wäscht die andere*.

It is obvious that preference is not the only factor that has entered into consideration, and advocates of preference must insist, as strongly as any one else, on the need for more energy, more study of local conditions, and more adaptability on the part of our manufacturers and traders and on the importance of national and Imperial organisation of trade. After all, preference itself is only a particular form of inter-Imperial trade organisation, though a very effective one. The existing preference, small as it is, has undoubtedly been of value, and we should soon realise what it has been worth if it were withdrawn. And withdrawn it will be, and at no very distant date, unless the United Kingdom is prepared to make the preference reciprocal. Ever since the South African preference was established there has been a strong movement against continuing it without a reciprocity from the United Kingdom, more especially in the ranks of the party who will be in power in the first Union Parliament. Two years ago General Botha firmly refused to entertain a suggestion of dropping the preference made by Mr. Merriman, and he has been consistent in his attitude since. But it is by no means certain that he will be able to continue his opposition to the demand from his own supporters unless he can show some reasonable prospect of an advantage in return. The blind infatuation of the British Government, if its life is prolonged sufficiently, is not unlikely to inflict as serious injury on British trade in South Africa as it is likely to do in Canada, where the valuable preference hitherto enjoyed has been most seriously whittled away by treaties with our competitors. Happily there is a reasonable prospect of a change which will definitely establish the principle of preference in the United Kingdom, and consequently establish it on a firmer footing and on a more efficient scale in South Africa.

XIV

OUR EAST AFRICAN EMPIRE¹

I

THE recent visit of the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies to East Africa, even if it should fail to bear immediate fruit in the shape of a more advanced policy of development on the part of the Colonial Office, will still have served a useful purpose if it has succeeded in advertising to the British public at large the existence and potentialities of the vast territories which have been added to the Empire in this part of the world during the last twenty years. Those who have studied the fascinating volumes of Sir Harry Johnston or Sir Charles Eliot have no doubt acquired a very good idea of the character of the British territories in East Africa. But to the 'man in the street' British East Africa or Uganda are, it is to be feared, mere names, signifying nothing very definite. Of all that this great region may mean to him and to his successors in the future as a market for British industries, as a source of the raw materials upon which those industries depend for their existence, and even as the home of a flourishing British community, he has but the haziest notion.

Like Ancient Gaul, British East Africa falls naturally into three main divisions: the tropical coast belt, including the lower valleys of the Sabaki, Tana, and Juba rivers, the temperate, highland region between the coast and Lake Victoria, and the tropical country, mostly in the Uganda Protectorate, which lies round the great internal waterways

¹ From *The Times*, February 1908.

of Lake Victoria, Lake Albert, and the Upper Nile. These are the portions that count; there is a fourth division, vast in area but otherwise unimportant, namely, the arid scrub land which covers most of the northern and eastern districts of the East African Protectorate, and extends southwards as a narrow strip—the Taru desert—between the fertile coast and the fertile highlands.

Of these divisions the coast belt is the one which has been known longest to the outside world, and which, nevertheless, is perhaps the least known to the British public to-day. The religious and political struggles in Uganda, the building of the so-called Uganda Railway, the influx of white settlers into the highlands, and the problems raised by it, have all to some extent attracted public attention of late years. But the coast, except for some tiresome skirmishing and blockading in the early days of the British occupation, has done nothing to advertise itself, and is probably less known to the educated British public to-day than it was to Milton's contemporaries. Even Mr. Churchill, anxious as he presumably was to see all that was to be seen, did not think it worth while to look at any of the coast towns, and altered the arrangements which had been made for his visit to the rich cotton-growing district of Malindi. And yet the coast is a region not only of great historic interest—the battleground of centuries between Portuguese and Arab—but of great economic possibilities. Every tropical product, cotton, rubber, cocoa-nut, sisal, ground nuts, to mention but a few, grows luxuriantly. The climate is tempered by the sea breezes, and compares very favourably with that of the west coast of Africa or with the coast climate of Central and South America. The population, a negro stock with a large infusion of Arab and other Asiatic blood, is more capable of participation in industrial enterprise than most other indigenous African populations, and could be supplemented

and improved by immigration from India. Lastly, the very fact that it is a coast and is abundantly studded with harbours, large and small, confers upon this region the enormous advantage of easy accessibility to the world's markets. A certain amount of trade is already carried on on the coast. The cultivation of cotton has considerably increased of late, and the British East Africa Corporation have established a ginnery at Malindi and are setting up another at Mombasa. But compared with its potentialities, the actual development of the British East African coast in the seventeen years that have elapsed since its occupation by us has been very slow, and cannot be said to reflect great credit on our administration.

Even richer and more fertile than the coastal region of East Africa is its other tropical region, that which lies round the sources of the Nile. A more beautiful country than that which extends along the shores of Lake Victoria it would be difficult to imagine. Here again there are vast possibilities for the development of an export in those tropical raw materials which are so vital to modern industry, more especially in cotton, rubber, and fibres, as well as in ground nuts, sesamum, and other oil producers. Experiments with cocoa-trees have been remarkably successful, and lead to the hope that Uganda may yet become one of the greatest cocoa producers in the world. In the Lakes and the Nile Uganda has a magnificent internal system of transportation which only requires the addition of certain small stretches of railway to develop its full advantages. But the long railway haul of over five hundred miles to the coast will always operate to a considerable extent as a handicap on the development of the country, a handicap which even the opening up of the Nile route to the north would not wholly remove. As regards labour, again Uganda is more favoured than most of Africa. More than the elements of an indigenous civilisation existed before the

country was thrown open to European influence, and the natives, though not industrious in the European sense, are quite alive to the advantages of any economic activity which will bring in money. They have readily responded to the suggestion that they should grow cotton in their fields, and will no doubt in time also realise the financial advantage of getting good cotton-seed, of picking their cotton at the proper time, and of keeping it clean.

The great obstacle to the progress of the Uganda Protectorate to-day lies in the terrible diseases with which the country is scourged, diseases affecting the native, upon whom the future economic development of the country must rest, even more than the white man. If these diseases could be eradicated, and they are to a very great extent eradicable, Uganda ought to be anything but an unhealthy country even for the white planter or official. It is necessary to keep in mind that Lake Victoria itself is nearly four thousand feet above sea-level. The climate consequently is by no means intolerably hot, and the nights are usually agreeably cool. The mischief lies not in the climate, but in the specific diseases with which the human and insect inhabitants of the country are saturated. Malaria, it is hardly necessary to say, is prevalent almost everywhere, though in a less acute form than in many other parts of Africa. Another fever of a specially malignant form, leaving the most unpleasant consequences in the shape of blindness, deafness, or partial paralysis, is caused by the bite of a particular species of tick. But the two diseases which, if neglected, threaten between them to exterminate practically the whole population of certain districts and leave the rest decimated and degenerate are sleeping sickness and syphilis.

It is barely seven years since the terrible and at present incurable malady known as 'trypanosomiasis' or 'sleeping sickness' first made its way into Uganda from the Congo

basin. In a few months it spread with terrible rapidity, and within a year of its appearance over 20,000 people died in the single district of Usoga. Since then the population of many of the districts on the lake shore and of the islands has been practically wiped out. Buvuma Island a few years ago counted a population of over 30,000. Two-thirds of that number have already died, and as the rest are all believed to be infected, it is only a matter of a year or two before the complete extinction of the sturdy race of islanders who defeated Stanley and Mtesa of Uganda and were with difficulty subdued by Sir F. Lugard. In all some 200,000 out of 300,000 are estimated to have died already in the infected areas. The nature and causation of this devastating plague were discovered by Colonel Bruce in 1903. The disease itself he traced to the presence in the blood of a kind of trypanosoma, and the carrier of the deadly micro-organisms he discovered to be the tsetse fly, so fatal to animals in other parts of the continent. As tsetse flies swarm in Uganda wherever trees and water are found together, the rapid spread of the disease and its peculiar distribution were readily understood. But it was another matter to find any effective remedy. To clear the whole foreshore of the lake and thus get rid of the fly would be a task wholly beyond the resources of the protectorate. But the foreshore at Entebbe, Jinja, and one or two other settlements has been cleared, and these are now practically free of the fly and safe to reside in. The white man, it may be said in passing, has in any case enjoyed almost complete immunity. His clothes protect him, especially on the back, where the fly is fondest of settling. His white skin is less attractive to the fly, and is, moreover, so sensitive that the fly is often flicked off before it has bitten. And though he may still get an accidental bite occasionally, it is only a small proportion of the flies that are actually infected. For one thing, the fly does

not apparently retain the power of conveying the infection for more than a few days at the outside. It is upon this fact that the preventive measures inaugurated by the Governor, Mr. Hesketh Bell, are being based. All the infected areas are being cleared of their populations. The sick or suspected are sent to special camps in fly-free areas, where every effort is being made to prolong or save life by treatment with atoxyl, the only agency that seems to have any effect, and that by no means a certain one. Unless absolutely pure and very carefully administered, atoxyl is apt to have unfortunate results, and even when successful its beneficial effects cease as soon as it is discontinued. Recent experiments have, however, indicated that a course of mercury injections following the atoxyl may have a permanent curative effect, and, if so, a very great step forward will have been taken in combating the disease. The rest of the population shifted from the infected zone are simply ordered to remain in fly-free areas till their own native districts have become completely disinfected. Places through which passengers must pass, or from which population cannot well be moved, are cleared of all water-side vegetation which could harbour the fly. In all this work the Administration is now meeting with the loyal support of the native chiefs, who have fully realised the character of the disease, and it is to be hoped that in a few years sleeping sickness may be effectively stamped out.

If the opening up of Africa from the west has been responsible for the introduction of sleeping sickness into Uganda, the opening up of the continent from the east has introduced a no less appalling visitation in the shape of syphilis. Though not wholly new to the country, the terrible intensification of this disease in the last few years is undoubtedly traceable to its reintroduction by Indian and Swahili traders or workmen following the construction of the railway. And strange, and even repellent, as it may

seem, it is indisputable that the introduction of Christianity, and the consequent abandonment of polygamy and of all the old restrictions on the liberty of women, has enormously contributed to the extraordinary rapidity with which the disease has spread over the country, in spite of all the efforts of the missionaries to inculcate a higher morality into a naturally immoral race. More than half of the population of Uganda are at this moment suffering from this terrible disease. In the kingdom of Ankole the proportion has reached the almost inconceivable figure of 90 per cent. In many districts from 25 to 50 per cent. of the children actually born die of this one complaint, and the loss to the population from the sterility due to this and kindred diseases must be far greater. Everywhere the population is dwindling away and, what is even worse from the point of view of the future, being ruined physically and mentally. Fortunately not only the Administration but the native chiefs are fully alive to the danger. As the result of a special inquiry just concluded (1908) by Colonel Lambkin, R.A.M.C., it is hoped that steps will be taken to establish hospitals at Kampala and subsequently at other chief centres, and dispensaries at other points, and to introduce the curative measures which have been employed by him and his collaborators with such remarkably successful results both in the Indian Army and at the military hospital in Rochester Row. In this case, as in that of sleeping sickness, nothing could be more regrettable than any parsimony on the part of the Treasury in sanctioning the necessary measures for saving the population of Uganda. Such parsimony would not only be bad financial policy—for it is only by the prosperity and development of the native population that Uganda can reach the stage of paying its own way—but a terrible reflection upon our own sincerity as a nation. We pride ourselves upon our mission to uplift races sunk in barbarism ;

we comment unfavourably on those who in dealing with their native subjects have no other object than exploitation in view ; is it much better to shut our eyes to consequences of our rule, consequences not designed but no less disastrous, for fear of having to increase a by no means lavish grant in aid ?

The third main division of British East Africa, the highland region, I have left to the last because it is the most remarkable and unique feature of the whole territory. Here, lying right across the equator, is a country enjoying a climate which is the most perfect expression of all that is meant by the word temperate. The days are warm and sunny, but rarely as oppressive as midsummer heat in England, for the breeze is always fresh ; the nights are cool—in the higher districts the unprepared traveller is likely to consider them bitterly cold. The rainfall is moderate but sufficient, and distributed over the greater part of the year. Nor is the country merely habitable for white men because of its climate. It is a country that invites habitation. The green meadows, the copses of dark woodland, the whole aspect of the countryside is one that suggests homeliness, to Englishmen at least. Again and again the visitor is gladdened by a spot which recalls the edge of a Surrey common, or by a stretch of deep bracken reminiscent of Scotland. Only little differences of detail in the foreground, and, afar off, the wide expanse of the Rift Valley with its blue heights beyond, or, it may be, the snowclad shoulder of Kenia, bring back to him that he is in the heart of Africa.

As a farmer's country this highland region possesses no slight attractions. In the rich red soil, and with perennial summer, almost all the products of the temperate or sub-tropical zone yield abundant harvest, and, in many instances, owing to the double rainy season, twice in the year. Maize, potatoes, coffee, bananas, ramie, sisal, apples,

peaches, even pineapples, all flourish remarkably. Sheep, after some initial difficulties, have done very well. Many of the settlers have great hopes of the future of the bacon and dairying industries. Others pin their faith to ostriches. The agricultural department believe they are on the way to securing a wheat which will not succumb to rust, as most kinds hitherto tried have done. If so, East Africa might possibly become, like Canada, a desirable home for the emigrant with little or no capital. At present it is emphatically not such a country. It is a country into which the immigrant should bring, preferably, £1000 of capital, and at the least £500. With that to start upon, and with determination and perseverance, he ought to be able to live well, to make a small profit after the first few years, and to stand a fair chance of making a good profit as the country develops.

Whether the export of timber can ever become a staple industry of this region is a doubtful question. There are large forests of excellent timber on the Mau and Kikuyu escarpments and on the slopes of Mount Kenia. But the railway freight to the coast must operate as a considerable handicap. Moreover, there is always a danger that anything like a denudation of the forest region would alter the climate of the country and thus affect its fertility. In this connection it seems a great pity that the Uganda Railway should consider it advisable to go on using wood fuel, with all its attendant disadvantages. South African coal could probably be used just as cheaply, and South Africa would be benefited, while East Africa would not suffer the loss of valuable forests. The discovery of coal locally would, indeed, be a great gain to East Africa. But none has been found so far, and except for a very interesting lake of almost pure washing soda in the south of the Rift Valley,¹ no other mineral of any value has rewarded the efforts of prospectors.

¹ Now being opened up by a branch line from the Uganda Railway.

There are already some three hundred white settlers actually on the land in the uplands, a small number perhaps, but not so bad a beginning considering that the country has only been open at all for four or five years, and that it is only in the last few months that the Administration, both at home and locally, has begun to realise that it is its business to facilitate, and not to impede, the work of settlement. The nucleus of a white colony already exists, and the next few years may see that nucleus increased by several thousands, while there is no reason why ultimately this region, small as African standards go, but actually as large as the South Island of New Zealand, should not support a white population of two or three millions.

It may be said that it has yet to be proved that the country is really suitable, in the long run, for white habitation. But the presumption in its favour is very strong. In South Africa, in Mexico, and in South America it has been shown that elevation can compensate for latitude, and reproduce the conditions of the temperate zone in or near the tropics. The fact that a vertical sun requires the precaution of a proper hat in the middle of the day does not substantially affect the general healthiness of the country. Certainly if the children of the present settlers, whether born in the country or not, are any evidence, they are very favourable evidence indeed. It does not follow, of course, that the East African uplands are a suitable home for everybody. Altitudes of five thousand feet and upwards, whether in Europe or in Africa, have as depressing and irritating an effect upon some constitutions as they have a bracing one on others. But though that constitutes an objection in the case of individuals, it need not prevent the growth of a healthy white community, any more than the cold of the Canadian winter, which some constitutions cannot stand, has prevented the development of a healthy Canadian nation.

Another objection is that this talk of a white colony leaves out the fact that there are already natives in the country. That is so, and it will be necessary throughout to treat the natives with reasonable consideration for vested interests, and to grant due compensation, in land or otherwise, for disturbance when disturbance is necessary. But that is quite another thing from treating the country as if it ought to be developed as a black man's country, and as if any area over which Masai cattle have once grazed, or which a Kikuyu has once interspersed with an occasional mealie patch, should be closed to white colonisation for ever. That attitude is a ridiculous one. The uplands are not a true black man's country, and the negro is, if anything, more of an exotic in them than the white man. Neither physically nor socially is there anything in the native tribes of the uplands that makes their multiplication and development specially desirable, or in any way comparable in desirability with the development of a white community.

It would be unwise to exaggerate the direct economic importance of this new colony for the British race which we acquired almost accidentally in the course of the general partition of Africa. For some time to come the economic value of the tropical regions of East Africa will be greater than that of the uplands. From the point of view of British industry, and no less from the point of view of enabling East Africa to pay its own way administratively, it would be a pity to concentrate attention too exclusively on the uplands to the neglect of the more immediately payable areas where cotton, rubber, and other raw materials can be cultivated by the native population under European supervision. The importance of the uplands lies in the fact that they can provide us in the future, as the high veld of South Africa has already provided us, with a local base of political and economic power. Through the

British colonist in the uplands British dominion in East Africa is destined to become indigenous and not exotic. In the long run a settler Militia will prove both a more effective and a cheaper form of military security than costly white garrisons, or native troops of uncertain value and loyalty. And again on the economic side the possibilities of the tropical regions are, in the long run, likely to be exploited far more effectively by white men who have only a few hours to travel from home in order to inspect them, who can always run home to recruit or keep in touch with wife and family, and who are from childhood familiarised with conditions 'down country,' than by men whose home is many thousand miles away. To use a military analogy, the British Empire possesses in South Africa, in the East African uplands, and in Egypt permanent advanced bases of civilisation which shall give to our dominion in Africa an effectiveness and a permanence beyond that of any of our rivals.

II

In the preceding article I attempted to sketch, as briefly as possible, the main features and the potentialities of the great East African territory which was added to the British Empire by the partition of 1890. How are those potentialities to be converted into actualities? How is East Africa to cease being a burden on the British taxpayer, and not only to pay its own way, but also to become a source of economic strength to the rest of the Empire? These are questions well worth asking, though, judged by their actions, British statesmen have not given them very serious consideration hitherto. Mr. Chamberlain, indeed, realised the need for a positive policy of development in the tropical possessions of the Empire; but the South African crisis inevitably absorbed too much of his attention to allow of more than the mere tentative beginnings of

such a policy to be put into action. The impetus he gave has not been continued. East Africa, in Mr. Chamberlain's day still under the rule of the Foreign Office, never felt it at all. That the time for a more active policy has come is a point on which there need be no difference of party opinion. No principle and no pledge prevents the present Government from carrying such a policy into effect.

Before discussing the particular requirements of East Africa it may not be out of place to touch upon a more general question intimately concerned with the problem of colonial development, and that is the question of the organisation of the Colonial Office itself. At the late Imperial Conference Mr. Deakin and his colleagues strongly urged the complete separation of the business which concerned the self-governing Dominions from the business which concerned the Crown Colonies and Protectorates. The reason he gave was that dealing with Crown Colonies created an attitude of mind which was incompatible with a proper understanding of the problems of self-governing states. But the converse is no less true. Dealing with communities for whose internal administration and economic policy it has no responsibility tends to obscure from the Colonial Office the more positive duties which it owes to the regions for which it is directly responsible. The fact is that the common name of 'colony' and the common form of communication from the Colonial Office to a 'governor' tend to hide the complete divergence between two entirely different sets of relations. That the relations between the Government of the United Kingdom and the governments of the junior states of the Empire should be removed from the Colonial Office and transferred to an Imperial office under the supervision of the British Prime Minister will eventually be necessary, not only for the maintenance of those relations, but also for the more efficient administration and development of the territories left under the Colonial

Office. A very small step in that direction has already been taken in the recent rearrangement of the work between the different Assistant Under-Secretaries. But as long as all the work of all the colonies still has to pass through a single permanent Under-Secretary, the separation cannot be really effective. The creation of a second permanent Under-Secretary to deal exclusively with the work of the Crown Colonies and dependencies is an essential step in a progressive policy of development which, it is to be hoped, will not be too long delayed.

In East Africa, too, administrative reorganisation is urgently required as a condition of the successful carrying out of a comprehensive policy of development. The present administrative division of the country into two protectorates—one of which includes the coast, the highlands, and a small portion of the Victoria Lake shore, while the other includes what remains of the Nile region—is quite indefensible. What East Africa needs is a single High Commissioner with three Lieutenant-Governors for the three main divisions of the country. Each of these three divisions will want somewhat different treatment. This will naturally be especially marked in the case of the highlands, whose ultimate, though perhaps remote, destiny is to become a self-governing colony with a predominantly white population. In the nearer future the needs of the highlands for special treatment might be met by the creation of a provincial Legislative Council whose powers might be allowed to grow gradually with the growth of the white community till they amounted to complete self-government in purely local affairs.

No less essential than the union of the two protectorates is the creation of a proper Civil Service for East Africa—a need which, for that matter, is no less urgent in West Africa and in other British possessions. When foreigners praise the success of our rule in India we throw out our chests and dwell complacently on our admirable Civil

Service, recruited, thanks to the generous terms offered, from the very pick of the brains of the country. The problem of maintaining order and creating civilisation in our African possessions is at least as difficult as that of administering a settled country like India. The hardship and danger to health, under present conditions, are very much greater. And yet we think it policy to offer public servants in a place like Uganda prospects of pay and pension not a third as good, all things being considered, as those offered to Indian civilians, and to appoint them not by examination, but by the haphazard methods of personal nomination which have survived from a bygone period. There is no intention of depreciating the work of the existing administrative officials in East Africa. But there can be no doubt that, in the long run, good men can only be attracted and retained by good terms. There is ample scope in our African possessions for the creation of an African Civil Service capable of playing a part as distinguished as that which the Indian Civil Service has played in another field, and offering as varied and promising a career to individual ambition.

To come now to the actual measures necessary for the rapid development of East Africa, the most important need, no doubt, is the improvement of communications. What the word 'communications' means in Africa can be realised only by those who have come in contact with the consequences implied in the absence of all roads except a nine-inch footpath, and of all transport superior to the native porter. The economic advantages of improved communications to the country at large are so patent that they need not be discussed. But what is often insufficiently realised in England is the direct economy in administration. Not only is there an enormous direct saving in the carriage of Government stores, a saving in itself often in a few years covering the whole expenditure involved, but there are

also corresponding indirect savings. Fewer troops and police can maintain order over a larger area. An infinitely smaller portion of the time of officials will be wasted in travelling, whether on duty or going or returning from leave. In case of sickness officials can get away quickly for treatment or better air, and return after a short absence, instead of breaking down altogether and being lost to the service for many months, if not altogether.

In respect of communications British East Africa is undoubtedly better off than Nigeria or than any of the African possessions of other states. The Uganda Railway is an achievement of which the British people may well be proud, though the engineer may shake his head over the extravagance with which it was built. Even more impressive in some ways than the railway itself is the fleet of large and well-appointed passenger and cargo steamers belonging to it, through which it taps the trade not only of Uganda but also of all that portion of German East Africa which lies within reasonable reach of Lake Victoria. Travelling on the railway itself can hardly be called luxurious, and many improvements might easily be suggested. But travelling on a lake steamer like the *Clement Hill* can compare favourably with that on many ocean routes. The railway and steamers are, of course, a Government concern, and as such are to some extent subject to the defects of an official administration. A private company, like the Canadian Pacific Railway, intent on developing traffic by all possible methods—appointing pushing agents at all places where trade could come, building hotels at important centres to attract or delay visitors—would probably do a great deal more for the country than is being done at present. But there is no real reason why, even in existing circumstances, the Uganda Railway should not adopt a somewhat more active and pushing policy.

Even now officials and goods for the eastern districts of

the Congo Free State are coming through Uganda. But a really effective development of trade and communication westwards and northwards from the shores of Lake Victoria can only follow after the removal of the obstacles presented by the various stretches of rapids on the Nile. The first of these extends from its source at the Ripon Falls for some forty miles down stream. The second consists of the Murchison Falls and subsequent rapids above the junction of the Nile and Lake Albert. A railway from Jinja or some other convenient point on the lake shore to below the first rapids, a second short line round the second rapids, and steamers on Lake Albert and on the intervening stretch of the Nile would throw an enormous region open to trade and development. A steam launch and barges already exist on Lake Kioja, through which the Nile flows just below the first rapids ; and a steamer is to be launched on Lake Albert as soon as possible. Surveys are being made for the two stretches of railway ; and it is hoped that one result of Mr. Churchill's visit will be the sanctioning of the expenditure required for this most essential step in the development of the country. An alternative but more costly scheme would be for the construction of a railway direct from Lake Victoria through Kampala to Lake Albert, a distance of one hundred and sixty miles. If it became desirable subsequently to secure through communication with the Sudan and Egypt, another short stretch of railway would be required to get round the rapids between Nimule and Gondokoro. These are the most important schemes of railway development for the present. In the highlands a branch line from some point near Nairobi to tap the rich district round Mount Kenia has been surveyed, and eventually the settling of the Guas 'Ngishu plateau may require another branch line towards Mount Elgon. For the rest, the building of roads and the introduction of wheeled carts and, for certain purposes, of motor vehicles

ought to suffice for the more immediate needs of the two inland regions of British East Africa.¹

In the coast regions the development of communications is chiefly concerned with the improvement of harbour facilities and of the steamship service. Mombasa has a magnificent harbour in Port Kilindini. But an antiquated lighterage system and exorbitant landing charges neutralise its advantages. The construction of a suitable pier or wharf with provision for loading and unloading goods directly into and from the railway trucks is urgently required. The other coast ports, too, Malindi, Lamu, and Kismayu, will also, in all probability, require considerable expenditure to equip them properly for their task. As for the existing steamship communication between its ports and with the outside world, East Africa is served by the German East African Line, by the French Messageries Maritimes, by the British India Company, and by a little Government coasting steamer the *Juba*. Of these neither the British India, which has the parcels post contract, nor the Messageries can be said to do very much. The bulk of the passenger and goods traffic is in the hands of the German East African Company, whose mail-boats touch at Mombasa every three weeks, and whose smaller boats enter the lesser ports. A really efficient British mail passenger and goods service for East Africa is an urgent necessity. It is not a mere question of sentiment, but one of business. The primary object of the German line is to help the development of German East Africa. Its mail steamers accordingly call at three of the German ports—Dar-es-Salaam, Tanga, and Bagamoyo—while they only call at one of the British East African ports. Its secondary object is to promote German trade generally; and, aided by its agents in the

¹ In the last two years (1911 and 1912) £750,000 has been advanced by the Imperial Government for the purpose of railway extension in East Africa and for the improvement of Kilindini.

various ports, it contributes most effectively, on the one hand, to encourage the importation of German goods into British East Africa and, on the other, to divert the exports in raw materials from the country to the German industrial consumer. What both British East Africa and England need is a line which will serve to develop the resources of the former and, both as consumer and as furnisher of raw materials, support the industries of the latter. It will be remembered that the Committee on Shipping Subsidies which reported in 1900, while pronouncing against subsidies generally, made a special exception in favour of a subsidised mail service along the East African coast. Since then the case for a British line has been considerably strengthened by the completion of the Sudan railway, which has provided another and potentially most important port of call on the Red Sea. Port Sudan, Berbera, Kismayu, Lamu, Malindi, Mombasa, Zanzibar, Chinde, Beira, and Lorenzo Marques, all British ports or ports doing the trade of British colonies, are surely sufficient warrant for a British mail service.¹

For the further development of the communications in the coast region a few shallow-draught steamers for the navigable reaches of the Sabaki, Tana, and Juba are an immediate necessity, while one or two short lines of narrow-gauge railway may subsequently prove desirable to tap districts too far from navigable water.

Besides the development of communications, there is much that can be done to encourage and facilitate the enterprise of the individual planter or settler. There have been many complaints, for instance, of delay in the granting of title to land owing to the inadequacy of the survey department to cope with its work. Nothing could be worse economy than to check the development of the country, and put off the day when it will be self-supporting,

¹ The Union-Castle has since established a monthly service.

for the sake of a few hundred pounds. Again, no form of expenditure could be more profitable, in the long run, than money freely spent on adequate Government experimental farms, agricultural and veterinary laboratories, and all the other ways in which the Government can gain and systematise the experience which at present the individual has painfully to acquire, often at the cost of exhausting not only his capital but also his fund of confidence in the country. Arrangements might be made to help to bring the individual exporter in touch with his market in England. To take but a single instance, nothing could help exporters in a comparatively unknown country like East Africa more than an official grading and marking of their produce such as the Natal Government has recently introduced in the case of maize. It might even be desirable in certain cases to allow the local Administration to give small bounties to encourage some particularly promising agricultural experiment.

With the help of measures of this sort the inflow of settlers and capital into the country ought to be greatly encouraged. Whether further direct encouragement either of white settlers for the highlands, or of Indian labour for the coast region, in the shape of specially reduced fares, free grants of land, or otherwise, should not be granted is a question which also deserves the most careful consideration.

Such a policy cannot, of course, be carried out without a considerable increase of expenditure. That this increase should simply mean an addition to the annual burden of the British taxpayer does not seem the most satisfactory method of dealing with what is clearly a case of development expenditure. It would be far better for all concerned if in East Africa and elsewhere the local Administration could, in conjunction with the Colonial Office and Treasury, frame a scheme of development calculated to place the colony in question on a self-supporting basis, and raise the necessary amount in the shape of a guaranteed loan to be

expended over a period of years, and ultimately to become chargeable to the revenues of the colony. The present system of Treasury grants is purely restrictive, and, in the end, is not likely to be economical, for it suppresses all attempts at a systematic working out of the problem of development.

The reader may, perhaps, at this stage ask what inducement there is for the British taxpayer to undertake all this increased expenditure, or, at least, increased financial responsibility. To that question I am at a loss to furnish a satisfactory answer under present conditions. The potential value of a country like East Africa to England is enormous, both as a market and even more as a purveyor of such indispensable raw materials of industry as cotton, rubber, fibres, and oils. But under the fiscal system at present prevailing both in England and in the territories under Colonial Office control there is no guarantee whatever that the market when developed will be a market for English rather than for foreign goods, or that the raw materials will go to British factories rather than to the factories of our rivals—a point already touched upon in connection with the shipping question. Why should not British industry have that guarantee in return for the expenditure and risk incurred by the British taxpayer? Why should not the producers in these new territories give that guarantee in return for the establishment of the settled conditions which make this industry possible? Admitting the validity of all the arguments advanced by Mr. Asquith and Mr. Lloyd-George at the Imperial Conference against the establishment of a preferential system in England, not one of them applies to the establishment of preference in a dependency like East Africa. Here there is no vast population 'on the verge of hunger' and dependent on importation from overseas for their food, no complicated export trade or world-wide shipping industry to suggest anxieties and fears of reprisal. No one can suggest that a

preference in favour of British imports into East Africa, or, what is still more desirable, a differential export tax on raw materials exported from East Africa to foreign countries, is likely to inflict hardship upon either native or settler, or to retard the development of the country.

The only argument that can be raised in the particular case of East Africa is that it falls within the regions in which the Powers which met at the Berlin Conference of 1884 agreed to maintain free trade. That agreement has never been formally revoked. But the conditions under which it was made have long ago disappeared. The Congo Free State has long ceased to be an international association with no other object in view than the promotion of free trade. German East Africa, indeed, has not got a preferential system of import taxes. But the German control of the shipping serves the purpose quite as well; and as regards export taxes, the German authorities have not hesitated to impose an export duty of 1000 per cent. on sisal bulbilles in order to keep for German East Africa the advantages due to an earlier start in sisal cultivation and to retard the development of sisal plantations in the adjoining British territory. The international 'opening up' of Africa has long since given way to a system of purely territorial division; and the sooner the fact is realised in all its bearings the better.

It has not been my purpose to drag in the fiscal question by the heels in connection with a discussion of East African problems. But the fact is that in East Africa, as all over the Empire, the fiscal question underlies all others. The British Empire, whether as a partnership of self-governing States or as a dominion over tropical dependencies, cannot maintain its coherence, or secure its development, under an economic system whose avowed object it was to sever the partnership and to reduce the responsibility of tropical administration to the narrowest possible limits.

XV

HUDSON BAY AND ITS COASTS¹

I

THE PAST THREE CENTURIES

PERHAPS the most important event in the British world to-day is the opening up of the great Empire which Canada acquired from the Hudson's Bay Company forty years ago. For the expansion of Canada involves a change in the distribution of political weight within the British Empire which must inevitably be followed either by its disintegration or by some constitutional rearrangement which will give Canada a voice in the control of Imperial affairs proportionate to her growing strength and self-consciousness as a nation. Every feature of that process of expansion is consequently of vital interest not only to Canadians but to Englishmen and, indeed, to British subjects in every part of the world.

The first phase of that process of expansion, the opening up to agricultural settlement of the great prairie region, is well under way. Between Winnipeg and the Rockies, between the American border and the Saskatchewan, three great railway systems are covering the face of the country with a network of lines, and population is streaming in at an almost incredible rate. The land available for free holdings is, indeed, rapidly approaching exhaustion within the limits of the prairie region. But already Canadian enterprise, stimulated by past successes, is eager for pushing on the next phase and for opening up the regions

¹ From *The Times* of September-October 1910.

that lie beyond. West of the prairie lies the great central region of British Columbia—as rich, agriculturally, and in minerals, as any part of the Dominion—soon to be opened up by the Grand Trunk Pacific and the Canadian Northern. To the north-west lies the vast territory watered by the Athabasca and Peace Rivers, where wheat has been grown successfully for twenty years without a break some distance north of the fifty-eighth parallel, over three hundred miles north of Edmonton, and where mixed farming may some day be pushed on hundreds of miles beyond, down the valley of the Mackenzie, into what has hitherto been regarded as practically a part of the Arctic regions. Vaster still is the empty territory which lies to the north-east and east round the shores of Hudson Bay. Here the isothermal lines bend down sharply, and even the most sanguine believers in the future of the North-West have generally acquiesced in regarding all that lies north and east of Lake Winnipeg as for ever irreclaimable wilderness. Such pessimism is wholly unwarranted. Not only are the intrinsic potentialities of this region considerable in themselves, but it derives an added interest and importance from the great inland sea round which it lies. The economic and political importance of that sea has been very great in the history of the continent and may be great again. In the last forty years its very existence has to all intents and purposes been forgotten.

Hudson Bay is by far the greatest sheet of territorial water in the world. Nearly a thousand miles in length from north to south and six hundred miles across, it covers an area of five hundred thousand square miles, or almost half the area of the Mediterranean. Separated from the open Atlantic by a strait five hundred miles long, it penetrates into the very heart of the Dominion. Its southern extremity, James Bay; extends to within three hundred miles of Lake Superior; Fort Churchill and York Factory on its western shore are

half-way across the continent. A radius of one thousand miles from the shores of Hudson Bay would not only cover the whole Dominion of Canada with the exception of British Columbia, the Yukon, and the mouth of the Mackenzie, but would embrace Minneapolis, Chicago, St. Louis, Washington, New York, and the whole of New England. When we remember further that the distance from Liverpool to Fort Churchill is practically the same as to Montreal, and that James Bay is almost as near as New York, we begin to realise how great, in spite of certain serious obstacles, may yet be the influence of Hudson Bay upon the development of Canada.

It is just three hundred years since Hudson Bay was discovered. As early as 1576 Sir Martin Frobisher, seeking for the North-West Passage to China, had reached Baffin Land, and he and several other voyagers subsequently entered the channel later known as Hudson Straits. In 1610 Sir John Wolstenholme and Sir Dudley Digges fitted out the *Discovery* of 55 tons for another attempt and entrusted her command to Henry Hudson. Passing through the straits Hudson entered the Bay and sailed southward along the east coast to James Bay, where he wintered. On the return journey in the following spring a mutiny broke out among the crew. Hudson, with his young son, half a dozen sick men, and John King, the ship's carpenter, who voluntarily shared their fate, were cast adrift in an open boat and never heard of again.

In the following year Sir Thomas Button, accompanied by two of Hudson's crew, explored the west coast of the Bay, wintering in the Nelson River. In 1631 the Muscovy Company sent out Captain Luke Fox to look for an outlet on the west coast of the Bay, while the Bristol merchants sent Captain James to explore southward round the bay which has borne his name since. Fox thought well of the climate and possibilities of the coast and annexed it in the

name of King Charles I. But for the next thirty years England was to be engrossed in other matters than exploration or territorial expansion.

So far the motive of the exploration of Hudson Bay and the adjoining Arctic seas had throughout been a search for the North-West Passage. A new motive was now to come into play. Between 1658 and 1661 two enterprising French fur traders, Radisson and Groseilliers, pushing up into the interior from Montreal beyond Lake Superior, reached Lake Nipigon and the Lake of the Woods. Here they learnt from the Indians that they were comparatively close to Hudson Bay. They at once realised the advantage of tapping the immensely rich fur country they had discovered by sea instead of over the thousand miles and more of lake and river from Montreal. Their realisation was quickened by the action of the French authorities at Quebec, who on their return fined them £10,000 for illicit trading. In vain they pleaded both at Quebec and in Paris for a reduction of the fine and urged the sending of an expedition to Hudson Bay. Filled with a sense of injustice, and no doubt attributing their treatment in part to the fact that they were both Protestants, Radisson and Groseilliers decided to see what their New England co-religionists could do for them. Failing to get any really effective support in Boston, they made their way in 1666 to England.

Whatever the defects of the restored Stuarts, they certainly showed a most praiseworthy zeal for the expansion of English trade. Charles II. gave the adventurers an audience and promised help. James II., then Duke of York, took a lively interest in the project, as did also Prince Rupert, as full of enterprise in business or in science as on the battlefield or on the quarterdeck. With such patronage Sir G. Carteret, who had originally advised Radisson to come to England, and who was the real founder of the Hudson's Bay Company, had no difficulty in getting

subscriptions from all the leading personages of the day. In 1668 the first ship, the *Nonsuch*, under Captain Zachariah Gillam, sailed to the Bay and wintered in James Bay at the mouth of a river called after Prince Rupert. The trip was a great success, and the subscribers applied for a Royal Charter, which was granted in 1670. By this charter the 'Governor and Adventurers of England, trading into Hudson Bay,' were granted 'the whole trade of all those seas, streights and bays, rivers, lakes, creeks, and sounds, in whatsoever latitude they shall be, that lie within the entrance of the streights commonly called Hudson's Streights, together with all the lands, countries, and territories upon the confines of the seas, streights, etc., afore-said which are not now actually possessed by any of our subjects or by the subjects of any Christian Prince or State.' A century or more was to pass before the full extent of this enormous concession was even realised. To begin with, the Company were content to plant their fortified trading stations round the shores of Hudson Bay, to reap the rich harvest of the fur trade which came down from the interior, and to keep out all interlopers.

From the first the French contested the British claim. A rival company was formed, and, in spite of the fact that there was peace between France and England, an overland expedition from Quebec in 1685 surprised and took all the forts on James Bay. During the wars that followed fighting was constant in the Bay. The French under the gallant D'Iberville repeatedly got the upper hand, at sea as well as on land. In 1697 D'Iberville, with a single warship, engaged three British vessels, sinking one, capturing a second, and driving away the third. For seventeen years the whole of Hudson Bay, except Fort Albany, remained in French hands and was only restored in 1714 after the Peace of Utrecht. The Company remained unmolested till 1782 when La Pérouse sailed in with a

small squadron. Fort Prince of Wales at Churchill, next to Quebec and Louisbourg the greatest fortress in North America, surrendered without a shot, and was followed by Fort York, the Company duly recovering its property after the peace.

For sixty years after the Peace of Utrecht the Hudson's Bay Company did practically nothing to exercise the great powers conferred on it by the charter. No attempt was made to open up the interior. Expeditions to organise a renewed search for the North-West Passage met with passive opposition from the Company's officers. In 1748 a motion was carried in the House of Commons for an inquiry which the movers hoped would lead to the revocation of the Company's charter and to the opening up to trade and settlement of the Bay and surrounding countries, but the report of the Committee did not consider the case against the Company sufficiently strong to warrant such a step. Fortunately, the paralysing influence of monopoly was broken by other means. The British conquest of Canada was followed by a considerable influx of Scotch merchants to Montreal and Quebec. Following up the tracks of the French explorers, and utilising the skill and courage of the French and half-breed *voyageurs*, the bold Scotchmen, subsequently organised as the North-West Company, set themselves out to capture the whole fur trade of the interior. Pushing beyond Lake Winnipeg they, in a few years, covered the whole of the prairie region right away to the Athabasca with their forts and stations. Their aspirations went even further. In 1789 Mackenzie reached the Arctic Ocean down the great river which has since borne his name, and in 1793 made his way across the Rockies by the Peace River and down the Fraser to the Pacific. Unless the Hudson's Bay Company wished to lose all its trade as well as all the territory it claimed under the charter it was bound to bestir itself. In 1774

it accordingly established Cumberland House on the Saskatchewan, and in the next twenty-five years had practically duplicated the whole of its rivals' establishments. A period of the keenest competition followed, on more than one occasion leading to bloodshed.

In 1821 the Hudson's Bay Company absorbed its rival. Throughout the long conflict it had enjoyed the strategic advantage of operating within closer reach of its base and thereby being able to get its goods up into the interior fully a month earlier than the North-Westerners, who had to bring all their stuff from Montreal. The Montreal route now became quite subsidiary, and it was at York Factory on Hudson Bay that the whole trade and communications of the West centred for the next forty years. It was by York Factory and not by Montreal that Lord Selkirk, ten years before, had sent the settlers who were to lay the foundation of Manitoba and of the whole future prosperity of the North-West. When the Oregon boundary dispute became acute in 1846 it was by the same route that a British force of five hundred men, Infantry, Engineers and Artillery, were sent up to defend the frontiers of Manitoba. It has been claimed for the Hudson's Bay Company that it saved Western Canada for the Empire. The claim is not unjustified, but the essential fact to bear in mind is that what enabled this great heritage to be preserved was the geographical position of Hudson Bay itself. It was Hudson Bay which at that time rendered the great prairie region more accessible from England than from the United States, and so made possible an effective occupation which the Americans could not dispute. Hudson Bay, no less than the St. Lawrence, has played its part in the shaping of Canada.

In 1869 the Company's territories were acquired by the new Dominion. Even before that the westward extension of the American railways almost to the frontiers of

Manitoba, and the establishment of steamship services on the Great Lakes, had begun to counterbalance the geographical advantages of the Hudson Bay route. The political transfer hastened a process which was completed with the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway. The Hudson Bay route, after being for a century one of the most important economic and political factors in North America, now ceased to have any purpose and fell into complete disuse. Hudson Bay itself, unvisited except by the one ship which annually supplied the Company's stations on its shores, and by a few American whalers, was to all intents and purposes forgotten. The Company, anxious for its monopoly, had always exaggerated the difficulties of its navigation, and public opinion, ignorant of history, and only aware that the Bay was unused, soon came to acquiesce in the belief that it was practically in the Polar regions and ceased to give it any further thought.

But of late years interest in Hudson Bay and the Hudson Bay route has awakened once more, at any rate in the prairie provinces. A series of survey expeditions has been sent to the Bay by the Canadian Government; the route of the proposed railway has been examined; more important still, the Government has now definitely promised that the railway is to be taken in hand. Meanwhile Lord Grey, the Governor-General, always anxious to see things for himself and resolved to add yet another chapter to that 'continuous disproof of the theory of the frozen north' which has made up the recent history of Canada, decided this summer—the tercentenary of Hudson's discovery of the Bay—to go over the route with a small party. Leaving Norway House, at the north end of Lake Winnipeg, on 8th August, with a flotilla of a dozen canoes, the party reached York Factory, a distance of over four hundred miles, on the 19th. The route traversed was the Hayes River route, the old highway from the interior to the coast, now deserted,

but once busy all the summer long with brigades of boats carrying the trade of half a continent. It was by this route that the Selkirk settlers came a hundred years ago, that Sir John Franklin started in 1819 on his first great exploration of the Arctic coast of North America, and that Sir George Simpson used to set forth on his stately tours round the vast empire subject to the old Company. For two days the canoes made their way up the winding little Echimamish, a tributary of the Nelson, across to the watershed of the Hayes ; then for a week we paddled or sailed across forest-girt lakes dotted with innumerable rocky islets and linked by stretches of tranquil river or of swirling rapids and tumbling falls involving many a portage ; then some fifty miles of almost continuous rapids, after which the river, now still and broad, swiftly carried us down for the last hundred miles between high wooded banks cut out of the deep glacial deposit which here covers the face of the country.

York Factory, with its large wooden buildings, is a mere shadow of its former greatness, an empty husk whose kernel has almost shrivelled away. From here Lord Grey visited the mouth of the Nelson River, a possible site for the future seaport of the North-West, and then went by launch to the *Earl Grey*, the Canadian Government steamer of 2500 tons, which lay outside the sandflats fully fifteen miles from the land. A day's steaming brought us to Churchill, the only good natural harbour on this coast, and from there the *Earl Grey* headed across to Hudson Straits. There was little suggestion of the Arctic regions in that voyage, and much more of the Mediterranean as we basked on deck without overcoats. It was not till near the mouth of the Straits that the *Earl Grey* began to encounter a few of the Davis Strait icebergs drifting up with the tide—a glorious sight in the bright sunshine. From Port Burwell at the entrance of the Straits the

voyage was continued, with occasional short stoppages at various points, down the picturesque, rock-girt, and deeply indented coast of Labrador.

Such a trip as this does not, of course, in itself afford any proof of the practical commercial value of the Hudson Bay route or of the region which that route will open up. But Lord Grey will yet have done a great service to Canada and the Empire if he has helped to dissipate some existing prejudices and to create a more serious and widespread interest in the question. The Hudson Bay project has hitherto been too much regarded as merely a fad on the part of enthusiasts in Manitoba and the new provinces. But it is essentially a great national and Imperial project—a project which may or may not be found to contain all the immense possibilities which its advocates claim for it, but which, at any rate, merits the very fullest consideration.

II

THE HUDSON BAY ROUTE

The historic importance of the Hudson Bay route to the Canadian West and the causes which led to its disuse have been sketched in the preceding article. Once disused, there was for a long time no practical reason for reopening it, and many motives which combined to discourage any suggestion for doing so. For many years the single line of the Canadian Pacific was more than sufficient to handle all the trade of the prairie region. When the new era in the Canadian West began ten years ago, and new lines were built, the trade still was not more than could be handled by the railways, by the lake steamers, and, above all, by Montreal, which had sunk a vast capital in establishing its position as a shipping port. The railway, shipping, and manufacturing interests of Eastern Canada could hardly be expected to advocate a project which at that time

might well seem to threaten them in the enjoyment of what they considered the natural reward of their enterprise. The Hudson's Bay Company, which alone knew the conditions in the Bay and in the adjacent region, was too much immersed in the traditions of its own past to be alive to the possibilities of development on other lines than that of the fur trade in the vast region over which it still retained a practical monopoly. The Canadian Government had plenty of calls on its exchequer equally worth consideration at the time, and backed by something much more substantial than the mere handful of votes that the North-West commanded in the Dominion Parliament.

The remarkable growth of the Canadian West in the last decade has completely altered the situation. For several years past there has been, so it is asserted in the West, an almost continuous grain blockade. In spite of the construction of the Canadian Northern and the Grand Trunk Pacific and the double-tracking of the Canadian Pacific between Winnipeg and its lake ports, Fort William and Port Arthur, the congestion continues. Indeed, these railways in a sense only add to the congestion, for their prairie sections with their branches lead to an increase of production, which steadily exceeds the carrying power of their main lines. It has been stated that not more than twenty per cent. of the wheat crop can get shipped away from Port Arthur before Lake Superior begins to freeze up, the bulk of the rest being stored in the elevators till the following spring. Again, during the period of the harvest the westward traffic is no little disorganised, and merchants sometimes have the greatest difficulty in replenishing their stores just when they are most anxious to do so, in order to meet the farmers' autumn purchases. The completion of the National Transcontinental from Quebec, with its low gradients and great hauling power, will no doubt make a material difference to the situation.

But it does not, in the opinion of the West, diminish the need for an additional outlet to the nearest tide-water. Moreover, the advantage of such an outlet on the side of Hudson Bay has steadily increased as cultivation has pushed northward nearer to the Bay and away from Lake Superior, while the extension of the railway system northwards has reduced the gap yet to be bridged to less than four hundred and eighty miles and so greatly diminished the cost of the project. Last, but not least, the growing population of the West is becoming a steadily increasing political power. The West has insisted on the Hudson Bay Railway and the Government has now definitely promised it. The only question is how long the actual execution of the project can reasonably be deferred.

To understand the eagerness of the West for the opening up of the Hudson Bay route it is essential to keep certain geographical points clearly in mind. The first is that the Canadian North-West is in reality no further from England than Eastern Canada, a fact not easy to grasp on an ordinary flat map, but obvious enough on a globe. The distance from Liverpool to Fort Churchill, on the extreme west of Hudson Bay, is only two thousand nine hundred and forty-six nautical miles, nineteen miles more than the distance to Montreal by Cape Race, and one hundred and eighty-five miles more than the distance to Montreal by Belle Isle Straits. But the greater part of the prairie region is fully one thousand miles nearer to Churchill than to Montreal, and even from Winnipeg at its extreme south-eastern end, the advantage of Churchill is still five hundred miles as against railway carriage to Montreal. The real difference in cost of transportation is, however, not quite so great, as the bulk of the wheat crop is not carried by rail all the way to Montreal, but is shipped across the lakes from Port Arthur either to Georgian Bay ports or even sent all the way by lake, canal, and river, to Montreal. The cost of carriage

eastward of Port Arthur may, perhaps, be considerably reduced some day by the construction of the Georgian Bay Canal, which will not only shorten the water route by four hundred and fifty miles, but will make it available for vessels of twenty feet draught. But the Georgian Bay Canal is a project which it will take many years to carry out, and before it is completed the growth of the North-West will have provided more than enough traffic for it without in any way diminishing the need for the Hudson Bay route.

Meanwhile, under existing conditions, the advocates of the Hudson Bay route assert that it would involve a saving of 15 cents a bushel, or 5s. a quarter, on their wheat. A safer estimate would be 5 or 6 cents a bushel, or from 1s. 8d. to 2s. a quarter. Even if this were only directly applicable to the portion of the crop which could be shipped out by this route, the effect in keeping down transportation charges all round could not fail to be markedly beneficial both to Western farmers and British consumers. The advantage in shipping out cattle would, it is claimed, be even greater. Railway travelling affects the condition of cattle far more seriously than the sea journey, and it is said that they lose on an average 100 lbs. on the long journey from Alberta to Montreal, and the saving both in freight and condition has been estimated as high as from £2 to £2 10s. The route will, of course, be no less useful in reducing the cost of imports, thus mitigating a chronic grievance of the Western farmers, and incidentally removing a considerable portion of the handicap which British trade in the North-West has to contend with as compared with American trade. Lastly, the route ought to provide a decidedly cheaper journey for immigrants from Europe, especially for harvest hands and navvies, and for settlers wishing to revisit their old homes.

So much for the argument in favour of the Hudson Bay route. The case is a very strong one, but it is essential to

take account of certain objections and qualifications as well as to consider the actual cost and technical feasibility of the scheme. As to the latter, there need be no doubt at all. The country between the Pas, on the Canadian Northern; the nearest point to Hudson Bay, and Churchill or York Factory, presents no engineering difficulties whatever. As regards the question of a suitable port, the best position geographically is York Factory, or, rather, the adjacent mouth of the Nelson River, 410 miles from the Pas. The mouth of the Nelson, it is true, is encumbered by shoals running fifteen miles and more out to sea. The deep channel through these would require to be elaborately buoyed and lighted, and in the actual estuary the anchorage would have to be connected with the land by a pier or wharf running out over the shoals for nearly two miles from shore, while the shoals would, as far as possible, have to be filled up by materials brought up in dredging. This would provide a really spacious harbour with almost unlimited accommodation, though with the undoubted disadvantage of being completely unprotected, except by shoals, from all easterly and north-easterly gales. Churchill, on the other hand, is a fine natural harbour encircled by two rocky promontories, and has generally been considered indisputably the better point for the terminus of the railway, in spite of the fact that it is somewhat further—474 miles from the Pas. The existing area of deep water at Churchill is, however, small, and it is still uncertain whether its extension would mean dealing with a rocky bottom and thus at once involve heavy expense. Meanwhile, the Canadian Government have hydrographic survey sections working at both points, and the result of their investigations will no doubt be made public by next year. In either case the total cost of the railway; harbour works, and other aids to navigation ought not to exceed £5,000,000 to £6,000,000, a small sum compared with

the potentialities of development contained in the route, if the claims of its advocates are justified. There is a strong body of opinion in the West in favour of the line being built and owned by the Government and leased to one of the companies, with provisions for running rights to all the others. But, judging by his latest declarations, Sir W. Laurier is more likely to sanction its construction by the Canadian Northern, which has already built up to the Pas, reserving, however, effective powers of regulation to the Government.¹

The practical objections urged against the Hudson Bay route have always been that the season of open navigation is too short to enable any substantial fraction of the harvest to be carried out, and that the dangers and difficulties of navigation in Hudson Bay, and still more in Hudson Straits, are such that the extra cost of insurance will more than swallow up any actual saving in transportation. These objections are, in large part at least, based not so much on any ascertained facts as on a general impression which is only gradually being modified by the weight of evidence. As a matter of fact, in the last three centuries something like 800 ships, including not only the company's trading vessels, but emigrant ships, troopships, and men-of-war, have navigated the bay with the loss, it is stated, of only two small ships during the whole period. The track through the straits and across the main body of the bay is entirely free from reefs and shoals. Fogs and heavy gales would seem, as far as the available records go, to be considerably less frequent than in the Straits of Belle Isle. According to the observations taken by the *Neptune* expedition in 1884, there were in August and September altogether 136 hours of fog in Hudson Straits, as against 302 hours of fog in Belle Isle Straits, and four days in

¹ Government construction has been decided on by Mr. Borden's government, and Nelson has been selected as the port.

which the wind exceeded 40 miles an hour, as against 13 at Belle Isle Straits. This, after all, is only natural, as the conditions which create fog and bad weather off the mouth of the St. Lawrence—namely, the meeting of the cold Arctic current with the warmer waters of the St. Lawrence and the Gulf Stream, and with the warmer air of those regions—are not present off Hudson Straits. On the other hand, the frequency of heavy snowstorms towards the end of the period of open navigation is undoubtedly a drawback. Peculiar to Hudson Bay, moreover, is the fact that the close proximity of the Magnetic Pole often causes the compass to behave in the most erratic fashion, a difficulty which can no doubt in time be minimised as its precise nature and frequency are more fully studied.

All these, however, are minor difficulties. The real problem is that of the ice. The first point to keep in mind is that Hudson Bay itself is in no sense an Arctic or frozen sea. The rivers mostly freeze up in the course of November, and after that the shallower shore water gradually freezes over for some miles out to sea. But the bay itself remains open, and, as far as navigation within its confines is concerned, might be utilised for traffic for fully seven months in the year, or even all the year round, if the harbours, like those of the Baltic, were kept open by ice-breakers. In the spring, and as late as the end of July, a great deal of the detached shore and river ice is floating about the bay. But there are no icebergs or heavy Arctic ice to be encountered in the bay itself. The difficulty is not with the bay itself, but with the straits. Whether the straits ever freeze right across is doubtful, and there are some who even think that specially constructed vessels could get in and out at any time of the year. But for ordinary steamships the straits cease to offer a safe passage after the middle of November, and are not, as a rule, sufficiently open for the resumption of navigation before the middle

of July. After the end of July they are clear of ice, except for the icebergs which drift in from Fox Channel at the western end and Davis Straits at the eastern. In fog or snowstorm these undoubtedly constitute a danger to navigation, but not necessarily more serious a danger than the icebergs off Belle Isle. With the establishment of wireless stations along the straits it ought to be possible to give very considerable help to passing vessels by informing them as to the whereabouts of icebergs in summer, and of the best route through the floating ice at the beginning and end of the season of navigation.

To sum up—the Hudson Bay route is certainly available for ordinary steamship traffic from 20th July to about 10th November, and experience may very possibly prove that this period can be prolonged by a week at the beginning and a fortnight at the end. During that period the dangers and difficulties of navigation are, it would seem, no greater than those on the St. Lawrence route, and there is no reason why insurance rates should be prohibitive. Given proper facilities at Churchill it ought not to be impossible for ships leaving England about 10th July to do three trips into the bay during the open season. The period is undoubtedly a short one. But an Arctic port like Archangel has for centuries conducted a large volume of trade within at least equally narrow limits of time. In the Canadian North-West the harvest is reaped in the course of August, and if threshing were done immediately most of it would be available for shipment before the middle of September. Even admitting the contention of the critics that a great part of the grain is not threshed till October owing to the farmers' anxiety to get on with other necessary farm work before the frost sets in, it does not seem unreasonable to suppose that, at any rate, an appreciable part of the crop would be able to get down to Churchill between the completion of the

harvest and the beginning of November, quite enough to afford substantial relief in the existing congestion and to be effective in keeping down freight rates on the Lake Superior route. Meanwhile, the earlier part of the open season would be available for the shipment of the remnant of the preceding season's wheat, and for the export of cattle and other products.

As regards inward traffic, the period of navigation, though short, would be very conveniently timed. It would allow harvest hands to reach the prairie in time for their work and to return when the harvest work was over, and it would enable the merchants throughout the North-West to stock their warehouses in time to meet the farmers' purchases after the harvest. This element of inward traffic is of the very first importance as an essential factor in keeping down the freight on exports. The export rate on grain from Hudson Bay is never likely to be cut down to the almost infinitesimal charge for which wheat is carried back by the New York passenger boats. But with a remunerative inward freight it ought to be possible to keep down the export rate to a figure low enough to enable the saving on overland transport to have its effect. The benefits to be derived by Western Canada from the Hudson Bay route may, or may not, be over-estimated by some of its more enthusiastic advocates. But it is impossible, on any unprejudiced survey of the conditions, to regard the project as anything else but a reasonably secure and, indeed, promising 'business proposition.'

But the objections urged against the route are not confined to the mere question of its commercial feasibility. There is undoubtedly a feeling in Eastern Canada that the route may not only injure the railway and shipping companies which are interested in the Montreal traffic, but may also divert a large part of the trade of the West from Canadian to British manufacturers. These fears are ill-grounded

and short-sighted. The greater part of the trade of Western Canada will always remain with Eastern Canada. If the Hudson Bay route gives substantial help to the development of the West, the Eastern manufacturers, railways, and shipping companies will all gain far more in the end by the increase in the general volume of trade with the West than they may sacrifice at the moment in order to ensure that development. Moreover, the Hudson Bay route is as available for Canadian manufacturers as for British. It may not, of course, be of any use to the manufacturers of Ontario. But it may make just all the difference to the Maritime Provinces, which at present have to face the handicap of the long railway haul to the West, and for which the Hudson Bay route might furnish just that stimulus to develop their industries and their shipping which they have lacked ever since the New England market was closed to them by the American tariff. That the fishermen of Newfoundland and the fruit and sugar growers of the West Indies will also be in a position to benefit by the new route cannot in any sense be regarded as injurious to Eastern Canadian interests. In any case, too, the manufacturers of Eastern Canada will do well to remember that the present high cost of transportation to the West is largely responsible for the low tariff agitation which has shown itself so active on the occasion of Sir W. Laurier's recent tour. A reduction in the cost of transportation, such as would be afforded by the Hudson Bay route, in the benefits of which they could at least share equally with British manufacturers, would be far more to their interest than a general lowering of the scale of duties, almost the whole benefit of which would go to American industries.

There is even less justification for the argument that the Hudson Bay route, by diverting traffic from the East and West route, may accentuate the tendency to a separation between Eastern and Western Canada, in which many

thoughtful persons have seen the greatest existing danger to the development of Canadian national life. That danger exists only in so far as economic conditions may attract Western Canada towards the adjoining States of the American Union. Anything which brings Western Canada closer to England can only strengthen the national life of Canada, which, after all, is Canadian, and not American, just because it is British. Whatever the commercial prospects of the Hudson Bay route, nothing can be more desirable for Canada, from the political point of view, than the carrying out and successful development of a project which to the existing links between Eastern and Western Canada would add additional links between Western Canada and Great Britain and between Western Canada, the Maritime Provinces, Newfoundland, and the West Indies.

Closely connected with the political aspect of the Hudson Bay route is its bearing on the problem of Canadian defence. The great weakness of Canada has always lain in the fact that hitherto she has been a country of length without depth, and that her whole system of communications has extended laterally along her frontiers. The Hudson Bay route would not only help to give Western Canada depth by encouraging the extension of cultivation north and north-eastwards, but it would also furnish Western Canada with a back door of its own through which reinforcements both of men and supplies could reach it even if the whole of the lateral communications between Winnipeg and Lake Superior were in the hands of an invading force. In the development of Canada the commercial, political, and strategical problems are, indeed, to a very large extent only different aspects of the same problem. And towards the solution of each of these aspects the carrying out of the Hudson Bay project is likely to make no insignificant contribution.

III

THE RESOURCES OF THE HUDSON BAY REGION

In the previous article the Hudson Bay route was discussed simply as affording a direct and economic alternative means of transportation between the great prairie region of Western Canada and the outside world. But the project is hardly less important regarded as a means of opening up and rendering available for economic development a vast area with potentialities which may possibly be greater than any one has yet imagined, and which certainly are by no means inconsiderable. The Canadian Pacific Railway was originally built simply as a means of communication between British Columbia and Eastern Canada. But from it has sprung the whole development of the North-West, once thought an unprofitable wilderness. The greater part of the railway system of South Africa was built simply to connect Johannesburg with the seaports. But the agricultural development of South Africa which is now beginning would have been impossible without it. And the same will inevitably prove true of the railway to Hudson Bay. It is not merely a question of the development of land along the route of the railway, or which may be linked up with the railway by other lines. It is a question of opening the whole region round the shores of Hudson Bay to economic exploration. At present it is from the business point of view all unexplored country. But once the railway and its port provide an easier entrance and a base of operations for the prospector, the 'cruiser' after timber and pulpwood, and the land company promoter, development is bound to follow in due course. There may be disappointments ; there may also be gratifying surprises. And the whole course of experience hitherto confirms the belief that the latter will outnumber the former.

The first question is, What is the extent of land suitable for agriculture which is likely to be tapped or rendered accessible by the Hudson Bay railway and by the general opening up of the Hudson Bay region? In dealing with this there are two factors which have to be considered, the climate and the character of the soil. By climate, it is perhaps as well to add, only summer climate is meant. It is the temperature in June, July, and August which alone decides what crops will or will not ripen, and the temperature for the rest of the year is immaterial. The Peace River region, for instance, though 300 miles north of Edmonton, and with a much lower average temperature for the year, is yet able to grow wheat successfully because its summer isotherm is practically the same, and because it enjoys, in addition, the longer hours of daylight due to its northern latitude. The sharp north-westerly and south-easterly trend of the isotherms is the most striking feature in the climate of Western Canada. From the Peace River country, north of the 58th parallel, the summer isotherm of 57·5 degrees, which may be said to mark approximately the limit of profitable agriculture in Canada, trends away to the southern extremity of James Bay, more than six degrees further south, crossing the proposed line of the railway at the 56th parallel, or about half-way between the Pas and Churchill. The immediate coastal region of Hudson Bay, extending back for a distance of 100 miles or so along the southern half of the west shore of the bay, and widening steadily northward, may consequently be considered permanently outside the scope of agricultural development, though successful ranching and dairying may possibly be carried on over part of the southern region.

But there remains a vast region still practically untouched within the 57·5 line. This region falls into two portions, the line of the railway coinciding approximately with the natural division. Of these the western region

is the more immediately promising. Between the Saskatchewan, the present northern boundary of cultivation, and the upper course of the Churchill, there is a strip from 150 to 250 miles wide from north to south and about 500 miles long, a great part of which is good land perfectly adapted to wheat growing and every kind of agriculture. The western half of this strip is on the same geological formation as the prairie region to the south of it, and differs from it mainly in being covered with timber and therefore more troublesome to open up at first. The eastern half is underlain by the archæan plateau of Eastern Canada, but contains large areas of good clay soil, especially one estimated to cover some 10,000 square miles immediately west of the proposed railway. Altogether this western portion may contain anything from 20,000,000 to 50,000,000 acres of cultivable land. Of this only the easternmost section would be directly opened up by the railway. The rest will no doubt be gradually opened by branch lines, but will probably eventually have its own main line running east and west from some point on the Hudson Bay railway to Edmonton. Such a main line would not only put this new northern region in an exceptionally favourable position for shipping out its products, but would also shorten the distance between Hudson Bay and Edmonton by at least 200 miles, and so materially assist the development of all the region west and north-west of Edmonton, as well as provide a direct through route between Hudson Bay and the Pacific.

The country east and south-east of the railway consists in the main of the old archæan plateau, the same country as that traversed by the Canadian Pacific for a thousand miles east of Winnipeg and extending all through Northern Ontario and Quebec, a wilderness of low rocky hills covered with bush and small timber and interspersed with innumerable lakes—an ideal country for holiday excursions, but

of no agricultural value. Scattered over it here and there, however, are patches, large and small, of cultivable land. Round the north end of Lake Winnipeg, is such a patch, part of the ancient bed of the lake, which has been estimated as covering 5000 square miles, and there are many smaller ones making in the aggregate quite a considerable area. But for a long time to come these patches are only likely to be developed where the neighbourhood of a mining camp or a pulp factory or fishing centre may happen to provide a local market. Towards Hudson Bay the wilderness of rock and lake is replaced by a gently sloping plain from 100 to 200 miles wide covered with a deep deposit of glacial clay. Here the soil is everywhere excellent, though much of it is overlaid by 'muskeg,' or mossy swamp, and would require draining before being fit to grow hay or crops. Only the southern portion of this good soil, however, that which lies south of James Bay, is within the isotherm of 57·5 degrees and suitable for wheat and general cultivation. This southern portion is now rapidly being opened up. The National Transcontinental Railway passes through the southern edge of it near Lake Abitibi, and eventually the cross lines building up from North Bay through Cobalt and from Sault Ste. Marie will traverse it down to James Bay. North of the Albany River the clay belt is too cold for general cultivation, but will probably grow potatoes and the hardier cereals as well as furnish good hay and pasture, and may yet at some future date make quite a prosperous cattle and dairying country.

In all the region round Hudson Bay agriculture is, however, a new experiment. The established industries of the country are the fur trade and fishing. Of these the fur trade is incompatible with any other form of development, and is bound gradually to recede. But the process will be a slow one, and in the great Labrador Peninsula to the

east of the bay the fur trade is likely to be carried on successfully for at least another generation.

The fishing industry, on the other hand, is one that will benefit enormously by the opening up of the country. The whole of the vast network of lakes and rivers west of Hudson Bay is full of whitefish, trout, sturgeon, and other marketable fish, and only communication with the outside world is wanted to encourage a development similar to that which has already occurred on the great lakes of Manitoba. Even greater are the potentialities of the fishery in the bay itself. Except for the whale, walrus, and porpoise fishery prosecuted in the extreme north of the bay, there has never been any systematic attempt to exploit or even ascertain its resources. It would seem that the Atlantic cod and salmon, which are found in Hudson Straits, are deterred from entering the bay itself by the cold water coming down Fox Channel. But Arctic salmon abound in all the rivers, while cod have been found along the east coast of the bay. It is inconceivable that so great an inland sea should be devoid of useful fish, and, if by any chance it were, the immense rapidity with which fish multiply would fully justify the attempt to stock the bay with cod, Atlantic salmon, and other fish.

The development of the fisheries will, incidentally, serve a very useful purpose in finding profitable employment for the Indians. The Government of Canada has always prided itself on its fair treatment of the aboriginal population, and even makes praiseworthy attempts to promote their education and to teach them the rudiments of industry and agriculture. But it is little use to take an Indian boy and teach him to read and write, to become a carpenter or a farmer, and then send him back to his lakes and forests, where he can make no use of his knowledge, and only suffers by finding himself an inferior trapper

or fisherman to his neighbours. It would be far better for the Indians of this region if the Government could devote its efforts to utilising their own inherited capacities as a means of development. It might, for instance, help in establishing some co-operative machinery to enable them to market their fish on good terms, and might train them in boat-building and other occupations accessory to fishing. Similarly, too, it might develop the native talent for dressing and embroidering leather on profitable lines, giving them some guidance with regard to the most saleable articles and designs, and helping to put them into touch with promising markets. In this work, indeed, there is great scope for an institution much older and even at this date more influential in this region than the Government itself—namely, the Hudson Bay Company. The impression left on the mind of the passing traveller certainly is that the Hudson Bay Company has lived too long on purely traditional methods and is neglecting opportunities. Of these the fishery is, perhaps, the most immediately promising. But there are many others which might be developed under a somewhat more imaginative and less conservative *régime*, to the great benefit of the company, its Indian dependants, and the country at large.

Practically the whole of the region lying round the southern half of the bay, from Churchill round to the 58th parallel in Ungava, is thickly covered with trees—black and white spruce, tamarack or American larch, poplar, and birch. But there is very little big timber. A lumber industry of moderate dimensions will no doubt spring up in a good many places, chiefly to serve local needs. But there is no prospect of any big development in this direction which would add materially to the world's steadily diminishing supply of timber. On the other hand, there is nowhere in the world, except possibly in Siberia, such an immense area of forest suitable for pulp making.

It is only a question of time, of barely a decade perhaps, before each one of the innumerable rivers that run down into the bay will have one or more pulp factories established on its banks. Short of something more than usually valuable in the way of mineral discoveries the pulp industry is likely to prove the real starting-point for the opening up of the Hudson Bay region, more especially of its southern portion round James Bay.

What the mineral wealth of the Hudson Bay region may be is a matter on which it is impossible to frame even the most conjectural estimate. Valuable as has been the work done by the Canadian Geological Survey in this region, it has necessarily only been able to gather very general indications of the geological structure of the country. Rock formations likely to contain minerals, and in places akin to the formations which have proved so rich at Sudbury and Cobalt, would seem to be scattered here and there over the whole of the region west of the bay. North of Churchill copper-bearing rocks and traces of gold have been found, and there is always the possibility of large copper deposits being discovered in the Far North towards the Coppermine River. A small mica mine is being worked at present at Lake Harbour on Hudson Straits. Ungava, however, valueless in other respects, also seems to be a promising part of the Hudson Bay region from the mineral point of view. Here there is an immense area extending southwards from Ungava Bay towards the Hamilton River, containing iron ore of the same character as the iron ores on Lake Superior. No signs of coal have been found either in Ungava or in any part of the Hudson Bay region, and the geological formation makes its discovery improbable. On the other hand, there is unlimited 'white coal'—in other words, water power—in all the rivers from the Nelson round to the Hamilton. The Grand Falls on the Hamilton in the heart of the Labrador Peninsula, with a height of

760 feet, are, in fact, claimed by those who have visited them to be at least the equals in magnificence and potential economic power of Niagara or the Victoria Falls.

So far nothing has been said in this article of the immense 'barren land' region extending west of Hudson Bay north of the 59th parallel or of the similar barren land which extends over fully half of Ungava. This region, covered with mosses, lichens, small scrub, and scanty grass, has always been considered absolutely valueless for any conceivable purpose, except possibly the discovery of minerals. But the experience of the Americans in Alaska and of Dr. Grenfell in Newfoundland suggests that even for this desolate region there may be an economic future in the reindeer. The European reindeer grows fat and multiplies on the herbage of these 'barrens,' which have always supported enormous herds of its near relation, the barren-land caribou. Three years ago Dr. Grenfell, whose work on behalf of the Labrador fishermen is known all over the English-speaking world, brought out 300 reindeer from Lapland under the care of a few Lapp herdsmen. Of these some 250 were kept at St. Anthony in Newfoundland, the headquarters of Dr. Grenfell's mission. There are now over 800 in the herd, all in magnificent condition, and, according to the testimony of the keepers, the new generation is steadily improving in size and appearance on the original European stock. The reindeer is, to begin with, a far better transport animal than the Eskimo dog, on which the North has hitherto relied in winter. It can pull as much as four of the best dogs, it can go faster, and, most important of all, it can live off the country, whereas a dog team has to carry its food with it. Reindeer milk is richer than either goat's or cow's milk and makes excellent cheese. Reindeer venison is pronounced first rate, by all who have tasted it, and the smoked tongues are a delicacy that even now find their way to London. The soft,

thick coat makes admirable wear for motoring, while the dressed leather can always command a market for gloves, etc.

In Alaska, the Eskimos, who, after all, are distant cousins of the Lapps, have taken kindly to reindeer keeping, and several of them are already owners of large herds and make considerable profit by supplying the mining centres with fresh meat. There is no reason why the Canadian Eskimos, and for that matter Indians and white men as well, should not develop the reindeer industry on a far larger scale than anything that has yet been attempted—a scale commensurate with the immense area of country available for the purpose. Mr. Fisher, the Canadian Minister of Agriculture, has already, with commendable enterprise, given assistance to Dr. Grenfell's experiment, and is now taking over a part of the herd. But the success achieved, both by the Americans and by Dr. Grenfell has been such that the Canadian Government would now be fully justified in pushing forward the experiment on the big scale, starting a number of herds at different points throughout the north country, and giving the public an example by converting the police and postal teams throughout the north from dog to reindeer traction. Another animal for which the Barren Lands might very possibly prove suitable is the yak, which in its own country, Tibet, is accustomed to a winter climate as rigorous as that of any part of Canada. Several animals were recently secured by the Canadian Government through the kindness of the Duke of Bedford, and it will be interesting to see whether this experiment, too, is likely to lead to practical results.

The purpose of the foregoing articles has simply been to show that Hudson Bay and the adjoining regions, instead of being an unnavigable Polar sea and a useless frozen wilderness, are capable of playing a by no means incon-

siderable part in the future development of Canada. If the prairie region has proved another Russia, then the Hudson Bay region can yet prove itself another Scandinavia and Finland, no less capable than those countries of supporting a hardy and industrious, though scattered, population. It is when we consider a region such as this, and then remember that there are other regions as extensive and far richer within the Empire—regions like Northern British Columbia or the new North-West beyond Edmonton in Canada, like Rhodesia or East Africa, or like great parts of Australia—still practically untouched, that we begin to realise the immensity of the heritage possessed by men of British race and the immensity of the economic and political task before them if they wish to maintain and develop it.

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